

# Equality Impact Assessment: Screening Tool

## Summary of proposal

Name of proposal	Black Cultural Centre
Reference number (if applicable)	
Service Area	Challenging Inequality and Events Team
Date screening completed	
Screening author name	Keisha Bristol
Fairness and Equality team sign off	Charlton Brown
Authorising Director/Head of Service name	Raj Chand

Before completing the EQIA Screening Tool please read the guidance and FAQs. For further help and advice please contact [equalities@islington.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@islington.gov.uk).

# Please provide a summary of the proposal.

Please outline:

- What are the aims/objectives of this proposal?
- Will this deliver any savings?
- What benefits or change will we see from this proposal?
- Which key groups of people or areas of the borough are involved?

The Council is committed to establish a Black Cultural Centre in Islington, designating a space in the community to residents from African and Caribbean backgrounds as a focal point for improving services, experiences, and outcomes for Black people in the borough. This commitment is part of the mission we have set out in our '[Islington Together 2030 plan](#)' and is being delivered as part our [Challenge Inequality](#) commitment to tackle racism, injustice and inequality within the borough, promoting equity, diversity and inclusion.

We have listened to residents who took part in our '[Let's Talk/Being Black in Islington](#)' engagement programmes over the past few years and understand the significance of creating a space that allows residents to come together in solidarity to address issues that disproportionately impact people from Black African and Caribbean heritage. Giving a community that often feels unseen and unheard a voice and power to positively impact outcomes by providing a safe space that representative of the intersections of people from Black African and Caribbean heritage.

We want to provide Islington's Black community with a space that enables people to come together to address issues that disproportionately impact residents from African and Caribbean backgrounds and empower a community who have told us they often feel unheard and unseen. It is anticipated that the Black Cultural Centre will:

- Provide a space that unites residents of African and Caribbean heritage and is inclusive to all ethnic groups.
- Offer a safe space to residents of all ages.

- Deliver opportunities for education and provide positive representation of Black icons, history, art, culture, and heritage.
- Empower marginalised groups and create a sense of connection and belonging to the borough.
- Deliver bespoke services and opportunities that will support those who are marginalised.
- Provide health (both mental and physical) and wellbeing services including holistic and therapeutic support in response to trauma and abuse.
- Develop and nurture budding entrepreneurs and new community organisations.
- Provide opportunities for individuals and organisations to become partners and work collaboratively to deliver goods and services to the community.

Having a designated space for the Black community will provide a base for residents to visit during difficult and challenging times and will also allow the Council to have better engagement and interactions with residents from African and Caribbean backgrounds and can ensure they are approached and involved in the co-production of new services and developments that are being considered.

Officers conducted an assessment of council-owned properties to pinpoint a location aligning with the criteria for the Black Cultural Centre. Subsequently, a space in the Arsenal ward at 16-18 Hornsey Road was identified and is currently undergoing renovations to meet the specified requirements. The anticipated opening date for the centre is March 2024.

The proposed operational model for the space involves appointing a local, Black-led organization to oversee its management and provide relevant support and services to the community. The primary goal is to operate the centre as a satellite, ensuring that Black communities throughout the borough have access to its services. Collaborations with local organisations and the council are envisaged to enhance the range of offerings.

It's important to note that this project does not aim for cost savings; rather, the cultural center is designed to contribute to the delivery of social value to the local community. Through strategic partnerships, the center anticipates generating social benefits in various areas, including physical health, mental health, and employment opportunities.

--

On whom will the proposal impact? Delete as appropriate.

Group of people	Impacted?
Service users	Yes
Residents	Yes

Group of people	Impacted?
Businesses	Yes
Visitors to Islington	Yes
Voluntary or community groups	Yes
Council staff	Yes
Trade unions	No
Other public sector organisations	Yes
Others	Please specify:

# What consultation or engagement has taken place or is planned?

Please outline:

- Which groups or communities you have consulted/plan to consult
- Methods used/will use to engage (for example, focus groups)
- How insight gained from engagement or consultation has been/will be fed into decision making or proposal design

If you have not completed any engagement activity and do not plan to, you should outline why this decision has been made.

Over the past two years, we have carried out several engagement and consultation activities to better understand the lived experience of our Black communities living in Islington. In 2021 we began the Let's talk Islington engagement, we engaged 6,000 residents, the feedback from the black community were experiences of inequality, income disparities and affordability and lack of access to services. Based on what we learnt, we commissioned the Ubele initiative to carry out more extensive research into the lived experiences of Black residents in the borough through 'Being Black in Islington' engagement. The consultation carried out by the Ubele Initiative unveiled six key themes:

1. **A sense of Belonging** - Many Black respondents reported that they did not feel a sense of belonging in Islington. Some community members explained that there was a sense of **exclusion and erasure** of Black people "Black People feel like they don't belong in Islington".
2. **Racism** - Respondents talked about lacking '**basic rights**', not having access to '**a level playing field**' and the existence of institutional racism. All aspects of the engagement, explicitly or implicitly, referred to racism and its impact on Black people's lives.
3. **Access to Services:** Black resident raised concerns about the cost and standard of living, negative treatment towards them from police, lack of employment, lack of high-quality work, lack of community programs and limited support for mental health.

4. **Lack of Trust:** Black People in Islington talked to us about the **lack of trust between the Black Community and the council** (and other public bodies).
5. **Representation and Community Voice:** There was a sense that Black People in Islington are not able to **influence decisions** and there is a **lack of community power**.
6. **Community organisations and Connections:** There is an absence of Black-led community organisations that are able to advocate for issues that impact the Black community and no clear channels to make connections.

These themes were used to create a vision and purpose for the Black Cultural Centre which have been communicated to the community through various engagement activities.

### **The Vision:**

- Create a space that primarily unites residents from Black African and Caribbean backgrounds and is inclusive to all ethnic groups.
- Provide a safe environment that allows groups to come together to address issues that impact the community disproportionately.
- Provide opportunities for education and provide positive representation of Black history, Black icons, art, culture and heritage.
- Empower marginalised groups and create a sense of connection and belonging to the borough.
- Signpost services and opportunities that can support marginalised groups.
- Provide health (*mental and physical*) and wellbeing services including holistic and therapeutic support in response to trauma and abuse.
- Develop and nurture budding entrepreneurs and new community organisations.
- Demonstrate Islington's commitment and dedication to supporting and empowering marginalised groups.

As a result of the engagement with the community, suggestions for the cultural centre offer include:

### **The Offer:**

Community	Culture	Commercial	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental health awareness and support</li> <li>• Health &amp; fitness classes / sporting activities and events</li> <li>• Antenatal and parenting classes</li> <li>• Domestic abuse support and services</li> <li>• Therapeutic services</li> <li>• Employment and training support</li> <li>• Libraries and heritage stories/events</li> <li>• Youth mentoring sessions.</li> <li>• Youth workshops, focus groups and projects.</li> <li>• Black Governors forum meetings</li> <li>• Saturday School and tuition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Art exhibitions</li> <li>• Art and crafts workshops</li> <li>• Dance, drama/theatre workshops</li> <li>• Community walks</li> <li>• Celebration &amp; engagement event events i.e., Black History all year round, Windrush, Independence days etc</li> <li>• Workshops and sharing circles.</li> <li>• Black History talks and seminars.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pop up shops</li> <li>• Community cafe</li> <li>• Mother and baby stay and plays.</li> <li>• Networking events</li> <li>• After school clubs</li> </ul>	<p>The council is committed to co-produce the Black Cultural Centre with the local community and have continued engagement activities to communicate the plan, listen to the views of residents and promote the opportunity to recruit a centre operator.</p>
<b>Activity</b>		<b>Number involved</b>	



Two 'Being Black in Islington' workshop events	65 attendees
Community Consultation events	56 attendees
Three Black Cultural Centre application Briefing events	30 attendees
Black Cultural Centre site viewings	10 attended (a further 9 were unable to view the site but were invited to view after submitting an application)
Black Cultural Centre online survey	59
<b>Total</b>	<b>220</b>

The feedback gathered through these activities has further shaped the purpose and vision of the centre. The operator will use these insights and establish community groups to co-produce the centre offer.

# What impact will this change have on people with protected characteristics and/or from disadvantaged groups?

Of the groups you have identified above, please now indicate the likely impact on people with protected characteristics within these groups by checking the relevant box below. Use the following definitions as a guide:

Neutral – The proposal has no impact on people with the identified protected characteristics.

Positive – The proposal has a beneficial and desirable impact on people with the identified protected characteristics.

Negative – The proposal has a negative and undesirable impact on people with the identified protected characteristics.

You should then assess whether the negative impact has a low impact, medium impact or high impact. Consider the level and likelihood of impact. Please also think about whether the proposal is likely to be contentious or perceived as a negative change by certain groups, as this could justify the completion of a full EQIA. See the guidance for help.

Protected characteristic	Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Description of the impact (if applicable)
Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Choose an item.	Our vision for this space is to transform it into a central hub for the black community across generations. We are committed to seeking ongoing feedback from the community to enhance our understanding of bridging the intergenerational gap and tailoring age-related services accordingly. The centre aims to partner with organisations to address issues such as social isolation and improving educational attainment levels for black children.
Disability (include carers)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Choose an item.	<p>The Black Cultural Centre is committed to providing services that cater to the needs of disabled users and their caregivers. The space has been intentionally designed to be inclusive and accessible to all. As part of this commitment, the centre will undergo a remodel that includes the installation of a ramp, ensuring improved access to the space.</p> <p>In alignment with these accessibility goals, the centre will collaborate with organizations specializing in services for disabled users and caregivers. This partnership aims to broaden the range of offerings, with some services being delivered on-site at the centre and others as part</p>

Protected characteristic	Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Description of the impact (if applicable)
				of the satellite services extended to the community. The objective is to create an environment that not only welcomes but actively supports the diverse needs of disabled individuals and their caregivers.
Race or ethnicity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Choose an item.	The centre is seen as a positive step in creating a more equal borough for all. The objective is to establish a dedicated space for the intersections of the black African and Caribbean communities in Islington, serving as a safe haven and offering an avenue to positively influence community outcomes. Research and engagement have revealed the outcomes the community would like to address are improved access to services this includes mental health services, reduce inequalities in education, an improved sense of belonging, community cohesion and representation and community voice, the centre aims to improve these outcomes. This initiative aims to give a voice to a community that often feels overlooked and unheard in addressing matters that significantly impact their physical and mental well-being.

Protected characteristic	Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Description of the impact (if applicable)
Religion or belief (include no faith)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Choose an item.	To acknowledge the diverse belief systems within the black community, the Black Cultural Centre will refrain from hosting religious activities. However, the centre warmly welcomes religious groups to organize and conduct non-religious services tailored for residents of Black African and Caribbean heritage. This inclusive approach ensures that the centre remains a space where various cultural and community-oriented services can thrive, respecting the multifaceted nature of the community it serves.
Gender and gender reassignment (male, female or non-binary)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Choose an item.	The center aspires to have a positive impact on gender inclusivity by providing services that are inclusive to all genders. Additionally, it aims to offer gender-specific services, including mental health support for men, LGBT+ services and women's groups. To achieve this, the center will engage in partnerships with other organizations, collaborating to either provide services directly on-site or extend them as satellite offerings to the community. This approach ensures a comprehensive and tailored approach, addressing the unique needs of both genders while fostering inclusivity in its broader service delivery.

Protected characteristic	Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Description of the impact (if applicable)
Maternity or pregnancy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Choose an item.	The Cultural Centre is dedicated to collaborating with healthcare providers to proactively address health inequalities of residents of Black African and Caribbean heritage. The centre will offer a variety of services tailored to new and expectant mothers, additionally, the centre is committed to providing support for families and promoting overall family health.
Sex and Sexual Orientation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Choose an item.	We expect a beneficial influence on the LGBT+ community through partnerships with organisations to provide tailored services. Recognising the scarcity of spaces that celebrate the intersections of the black community, the centre aims to address this gap. By delivering services focused on mental health, physical well-being, and community cohesion, the space aspires to enhance outcomes for the community, promoting a more inclusive and supportive environment.
Marriage or Civil Partnership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Choose an item.	It is anticipated that families will experience positive benefits from the Black Cultural Centre. The space is designed to be inclusive and welcoming to individuals of all age groups. Specific services catering to families will be offered, and the facility will be available for hire for celebratory

Protected characteristic	Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Description of the impact (if applicable)
				events. In collaboration with the council and partners, the centre will actively participate in organizing and promoting family events while also providing valuable signposting services.
Other (e.g. people living in poverty, looked after children, people who are homeless or refugees)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Choose an item.	The primary objective of the Black Cultural Centre is to serve as an inclusive space that reflects the diverse intersections within the Black Caribbean and African Heritage residents of the borough. The centre is committed to offering targeted services, addressing the needs of groups such as the homeless and refugees. This initiative aims to enhance outcomes through strategic partnerships with local organisations, fostering a supportive environment for these communities within the borough.

## How do you plan to mitigate negative impacts?

Where there are disproportionate impacts on groups with protected characteristics, please outline:

- The other options that were explored before deciding on this proposal and why they were not pursued
- Action that is being taken to mitigate the negative impacts

Action	Lead	Deadline	Comments

Screening Decision	Outcome
Neutral or Positive – no full EQIA needed*.	Yes
Negative – Low Impact – full EQIA at the service director’s discretion*.	No
Negative – Medium or High Impact – must complete a full EQIA.	No
Is a full EQIA required? Service decision:	Yes/No



Screening Decision	Outcome
Is a full EQIA required? Fairness and Equality recommendation:	No

\* If a full EQIA is not required, you are still legally required to monitor and review the proposed changes after implementation to check they work as planned and to screen for unexpected equality impacts.

Please send this completed EQIA Screening Tool to [equalities@islington.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@islington.gov.uk) for quality checking by the Fairness and Equality Team.