

Resident Impact Assessment

Title of policy, procedure, function, service activity or financial decision: Temporary Accommodation Location Policy

Service Area: Housing Needs and Strategy

1. What are the intended outcomes of this policy, function etc?

86% of the council's temporary accommodation portfolio consists of properties leased or licensed from private landlords and agents. Currently 63% of households in temporary accommodation are placed within Islington, with the rest placed in Greater London – predominantly north and east London with good transport links to Islington.

Due to Local Housing Allowance caps and the introduction of the Total Benefit Cap, coupled with a general lack of housing supply and constantly rising private sector rents, it has become increasingly difficult to secure affordable temporary accommodation, especially within Islington. The purpose of this policy is to meet the housing need of homeless households in as fair and transparent way as possible, using objective assessments using needs based criteria. The council intends to continue to procure as much temporary accommodation within the borough as possible. This policy gives a clear framework for deciding where households go.

The intended outcome of the new policy is to ensure that homeless households are offered temporary accommodation that is suitable and affordable. The council will undertake a comprehensive assessment of households' needs to ensure that the location and physical aspects of the temporary accommodation are suitable for them.

2. Resident Profile

Who is going to be impacted by this change i.e. residents/service users/tenants? Please complete data for your service users. If your data does not fit into the categories in this table, please copy and paste your own table in the space below. Please refer to **section 3.3** of the guidance for more information.

		Borough profile	Service User profile
		Total: 206,285	Total:
Gender	Female	51%	It has the potential to impact on all of these groups.
	Male	49%	
Age	Under 16	32,825	For specific profiles of temporary accommodation clients, please see 3.1
	16-24	29,418	
	25-44	87,177	

	45-64	38,669	below.
	65+	18,036	
Disability	Disabled	16%	
	Non-disabled	84%	
Sexual orientation	LGBT	No data	
	Heterosexual/straight	No data	
Race	BME	52%	
	White	48%	
Religion or belief	Christian	40%	
	Muslim	10%	
	Other	4.5%	
	No religion	30%	
	Religion not stated	17%	

3. Equality impacts

With reference to the [guidance](#), please describe what are the equality and socio-economic impacts for residents and what are the opportunities to challenge prejudice or promote understanding?

3.1 Service Users Profile

- There are approximately 940 homeless households currently placed in temporary accommodation by the council. Of those:
 - 750 (80%) are households with children
 - 190 (20%) are single persons
- Of the families with children, 585 (80%) are lone parent households.
- There are 1260 children living in temporary accommodation.
- Women represent 67% of all homeless households in temporary accommodation. This is largely due to the fact that the vast majority of single parent families are headed by women (95%).
- 55% of households are from BME groups.
- Over 95% of all households in temporary accommodation are in receipt of housing benefit to help pay their rent.

3.2 How will the new policy impact on clients with protected characteristics?

Age

Age is only recorded for single clients, age data are therefore not representative of the temporary accommodation population as a whole.

Amongst single clients the most prevalent age group is 25-44 years, followed by 45-49 years and 16-24 years in equal proportions.

Many households have school age children. Being placed in accommodation outside of the borough could have a potential impact on households in terms of changing schools, and loss of educational support services and networks.

When placing a family out of borough, the council will take childrens' ages and their educational and support needs into consideration, and will make every effort to establish the availability and location of schools and required services in the new area.

Households with children at risk, on the Child Protection Register or significantly disadvantaged, will be prioritised for an offer of accommodation within Islington.

Disability

Disabled clients may be negatively impacted by being placed out of the borough, by being further away from hospitals, clinics, support centres etc, They may also find it harder to travel.

Disabled clients who have regular medical appointments in borough will be prioritised for an offer of accommodation within or as near as possible to Islington.

When placed out of borough, consideration will be given to the ease of transport for disabled clients to and from Islington.

For clients with sensory disabilities, special equipment can be provided or arrangements put in place to adapt the accommodation to the client's specific needs.

Gender re-assignment

We do not have data available on gender re-assignment of clients in temporary accommodation.

However, the council will endeavour to place clients close to locations with appropriate community support services.

Marriage / Civil Partnership

We do not have data available on marriage or civil partnership status of clients in temporary accommodation.

It is not envisaged that the new policy will have a specific impact on this protected characteristic.

Pregnancy + Maternity

Pregnant women are included in 'Households with children', for temporary accommodation data recording purposes. Separate figures for pregnant women are not available.

Households with children make up the majority of all homeless households (80%), with each household having 1.7 children on average.

A transition of services during pregnancy could have a potential negative impact, as could a potential loss of support networks.

The council will actively seek to link clients in to maternity and support services in the new area.

All staff have been trained in safeguarding matters and procedures to ensure potential issues are identified and dealt with appropriately.

A dedicated mother and baby TA scheme has been set up in the past year within Islington.

Race

Clients from BME groups are slightly over represented amongst homeless clients compared with the general population (55% against 52%).

There is a significant potential negative impact on BME groups if they were to be placed in areas which are less diverse, possibly causing isolation and potential discrimination.

Every effort will be made to place families in areas that will welcome and meet the needs of BME groups, and with appropriate existing community groups in place.

Clients from BME groups are more likely to be affected by housing benefit caps, which will in turn impact on being able to secure affordable accommodation.

Affordability assessments will be carried out for all clients, not only BME groups, to try and ensure that people are being placed in accommodation that is affordable to them.

Religion and belief

There is a potential negative impact on clients being placed in areas where they may be unable or meet hostility to practice their religions. The council will ensure that clients are placed in locations with reasonable access to appropriate institutions of worship.

Sex

There is a higher ratio of women in temporary accommodation mainly due to the number of lone parent households headed by women.

The new policy therefore unavoidably has a greater impact on women than men.

Efforts will be made to place women clients in safe and secure accommodation, in areas with good transport links, and with support and community facilities in place.

Sexual orientation

Due to under-reporting, no comprehensive data are available of sexual orientation of temporary accommodation clients.

Where specific needs are identified, the council will take these into consideration when allocating temporary accommodation.

3.3 Socio-economic impacts

Households on low incomes, and those affected by welfare reform and housing policy changes may be unable to afford accommodation in Islington. The council may have no

option but to find secure, suitable and affordable accommodation outside of the borough. This may have some negative impacts on those having to move away from existing community and support networks.

However, the policy is expected to benefit residents in the greatest need of accommodation.

The council will attempt to mitigate negative impacts by seeking accommodation as near to Islington as possible, in locations with good transport links and easy access to Islington. Accommodation will be sought in areas with with relevant services and facilities to meet clients' needs.

Floating Support services such as Families First and Single Homeless Project are set up to provide services to clients in temporary accommodation out of borough.

Increased use of text and email in communication between the council and clients also helps to overcome geographical distances; it reduces the need to travel and makes communication more instant and effective.

The council is also diversifying its temporary accommodation portfolio by making use of own council stock, to create more affordable supply within borough. 63% of all temporary accommodation is now within Islington.

4. Safeguarding and Human Rights impacts

a) Safeguarding risks and Human Rights breaches

Please describe any safeguarding risks for children or vulnerable adults AND any potential human rights breaches that may occur as a result of the proposal? Please refer to **section 4.8** of the [guidance](#) for more information.

The principles of the Human Rights act are incorporated into the policy, and particular regard has been given to article 8 - Right to privacy and family life - everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence.

The policy includes provisions to ensure safeguarding risks are dealt with appropriately.

If potential safeguarding and human rights risks are identified then please contact equalities@islington.gov.uk to discuss further:

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
Carry out comprehensive suitability and	Housing Solutions and	Ongoing. Review

affordability assessments when placing clients in temporary accommodation	Temporary Accommodation teams	to be carried out in 4 months after policy implemented
Produce information leaflet for clients explaining the limitations of sourcing affordable accommodation, esp within Islington	Temporary Accommodation Team	July 2016
Work with IMAX and IWORk to maximise clients' income, and assist them mitigate the impact of welfare reform.	Temporary Accommodation Team	Ongoing
Secure funding for feasibility study for converting some existing reception centre units into accessible and affordable accommodation for disabled clients	Karen Lucas + Irna van der Palen	September 2016

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: ___Irna van der Palen

Date: 04/04/2016

Head of Service or higher:

Signed: _____

Date: [Click here to enter a date.](#)