

GENERIC EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

Stage 1 – screening to establish if the function has any relevance to any equality issue and/or monitored group i.e.

- Could the function affect one or more equality group in a different way to another group?
- Establish whether different equality groups have different needs
- Establish whether the function contributes to or hinders equality of opportunity

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| 1a | <p>Please give a brief description of the function and its purpose*</p> <p>The Allocation scheme is the document used to assess eligibility for inclusion and priority within the Housing Register. It is compliant with Part VI of the Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002.</p> <p>Bromley Homeseekers is an online Choice Based Lettings service which allows customers who are included on the Housing Register to view, bid on and secure social housing.</p> <p>The Scheme and Bromley Homeseekers have both been subject to extensive consultation at inception and were previously approved by Members in 2008. They are being updated in order to be compliant with current statutory and legislative requirements and to better manage the supply of accommodation and promote alternative housing options.</p> | | |
| 1b | <p>How would you classify the function type?</p> <p>The service is provided on the basis of an online application form and online bidding system. Both of which can be accessed via www.bromleyhomeseekers.co.uk</p> | | |
| 1c | <p>Is the function accessible for all groups? Either tick the box 'Accessible to all groups' and provide <u>relevant evidence</u> OR tick the box for each group to whom the function is <u>not accessible</u> or for whom there may be needs or considerations to accommodate.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="201 1429 1433 1805"> <tr> <td data-bbox="201 1429 839 1805"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accessible for all groups <input type="checkbox"/> Age <input type="checkbox"/> Disability <input type="checkbox"/> Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Marriage & civil partnership </td> <td data-bbox="839 1429 1433 1805"> <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy & maternity <input type="checkbox"/> Race <input type="checkbox"/> Religion & belief <input type="checkbox"/> Transgender or Transsexual </td> </tr> </table> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accessible for all groups <input type="checkbox"/> Age <input type="checkbox"/> Disability <input type="checkbox"/> Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Marriage & civil partnership | <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy & maternity <input type="checkbox"/> Race <input type="checkbox"/> Religion & belief <input type="checkbox"/> Transgender or Transsexual |
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| 1d | <p>Is it likely that there will be a negative impact on one or more of the equality groups, or is it clear at this stage that it will be equality neutral? (No negative impact on the groups) Please tick in the box equality neutral OR tick the box for the group(s) that will suffer a negative impact. If you have ticked the box 'equality neutral' please provide evidence.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="201 1977 1433 2072"> <tr> <td data-bbox="201 1977 839 2072"> <input type="checkbox"/> Equality neutral </td> <td data-bbox="839 1977 1433 2072"> <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy & maternity </td> </tr> </table> | <input type="checkbox"/> Equality neutral | <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy & maternity |
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|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability <input type="checkbox"/> Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Marriage & civil partnership | <input type="checkbox"/> Race <input type="checkbox"/> Religion & belief <input type="checkbox"/> Transgender or Transsexual <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Limited Access to IT |
| If you consider that the impact is Equality Neutral then go to question 1h Otherwise go to question 1e | |

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| 1e | <p>What are the negative impacts associated with the change in function?</p> <p>Customers with literacy difficulties or limited access to IT may struggle to understand the changes,</p> |
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| 1f | <p>Are there positive impacts associated with this function?</p> <p>Through the extension of the local connection criteria greater preference will be given to local households in housing need.</p> <p>The assessment process will be streamlined enabling for processing times to be improved.</p> <p>Members of the armed forces with a housing need will receive increased priority on the Housing Register in comparison to non-forces households with similar circumstances.</p> <p>The number of households with an Emergency banding will decrease allowing for quicker move-on for those whose circumstances are most urgent.</p> <p>Limiting the number of offers made will reduce the time spent and overall cost per placement in temporary accommodation and will reduce move-on times overall.</p> |
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| 1g | <p>At this stage, what plans could be built in to address any negative impacts, and/or to add measures which promote a positive impact, or could you consider an alternative approach which may better achieve the promotion of equality?</p> <p>Access to free IT is available at Council Offices, Libraries, Housing Association Offices and local Community Learning shops. Staff are available to assist those that cannot complete the online form independently or who require assistance with bidding. Automated bidding is also available.</p> <p>In communicating the changes relevant support workers i.e. Leaving Care Officers, Supported Housing Workers, Care Co-Ordinators, Housing Officers etc will be contacted and advised of any changes affecting their clients. Customers will be notified in writing of the changes and information will be published on the website. Where a response is required a chaser letter will be sent prior to any cancellation being actioned. Staff will be available to discuss these changes with clients via telephone, email, in writing or in person.</p> |
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| 1h | <p>The Council has a responsibility to promote positive attitudes to equal opportunities in public life. Has this responsibility been discharged in the application of this function? If yes give examples.</p> <p>In conjunction with the Allocation Scheme and moves to social housing the Housing Needs Department continues to promote and increase access to alternative Housing Options in order to provide customers with access to suitable accommodation which meets the needs of their household.</p> |
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| 1i | Are there any Human Rights Issues? If so what are they? No |
| 1j | Is a full impact assessment required? No. A full EIA was carried out when the Scheme and Bromley Homeseekers was introduced in October 2008. These are minor changes and improvements which are being made to make the service fit for purpose in the current climate. |

Stage 2 – full impact assessment

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| 2a | Does the function affect or impact on the public, whether directly or indirectly? X Yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |
| | Provide any relevant information here. Inclusion on the Register is being further restricted; we have taken the decision to only include those on the Housing Register who have a high level of priority in accordance with statutory responsibilities (reasonable preference categories) and local preference categories. This will reduce the existing register by between 750-800 households and will further reduce the numbers that qualify for inclusion going forward. |
| 2b | Have complaints or feedback been received about the function and its effect on different equality groups? X Yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |
| | Provide evidence by documenting all reliable up to date information. The changes were consulted upon. Details and a summary have been loaded onto the Bromley.gov website: http://www.bromley.gov.uk/downloads/download/344/housing_allocation_scheme_consultation |
| 2c | Outsourced services - if the function is provided by external organisations/agencies on behalf of the Council please detail any arrangements you have to ensure that the function promotes equality; this may include contract conditions. Provide evidence by documenting all reliable up to date information. The Allocation Scheme has been devised by the Council to comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements. Details regarding who does and does not qualify for inclusion onto the scheme are detailed in the scheme documentation. This is published in full along with a summary on the Homeseekers website www.bromleyhomeseekers.co.uk Clients are able to request reviews of decisions made in respect of their applications. Details of successful nominations are made publicly available on the Bromley Homeseekers website. Bromley Homeseekers continues to be provided by Home Connections. There is no change to the original contracted agreement. In order to assist customers there is staff assistance available to complete the online form. Staff can assist applicants to bid for accommodation either through the Housing Register team or the Support and Resettlement Service. Automated bidding can be set up where needed. Information regarding adaptations, rental amounts and service charges are included in the advert details. Information can be provided in a variety of languages upon request. |

The website complies with the W3C Web Accessibility Initiative and has been built to be accessible to those who are hard of hearing, visually impaired or who have difficulty using a computer mouse.

Access to the internet, assistance and training is also provided at local libraries and local community learning shops.

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| 2d | Does the function have employment implications for Council staff | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |
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2e If you have established that the function does have an adverse impact on one or more of the groups, then you must identify whether this is justifiable. If not, then the function must be changed. Please set out the adverse impact and the business justification for continuing with this situation.

See response in section 2C.

2f Monitoring – give details of any monitoring being carried out on existing functions.

The revised scheme will be monitored in respect of numbers approaching the service, numbers included on the Register, assessment and waiting times, temporary accommodation spend, refusals and complaints. This will take a similar form to the service monitoring that is currently undertaken.

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| 2f (i) | If this is a new function, or not currently monitored, are you planning to monitor the impact of the function | | |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |
| If yes add details to action plan | | | |
| If no please explain why it is not considered appropriate to do so. | | | |

2g Consultation – If you have not carried out consultation, or if you need to carry out further consultation who will you be consulting with and by what methods?

The changes were consulted upon. Details and a summary have been loaded onto the Bromley.gov website:
http://www.bromley.gov.uk/downloads/download/344/housing_allocation_scheme_consultation

2h Evidence – what further evidence do you have about considerations with regard to equality issues that you have made concerning this function?
 e.g. audit reports, minutes from meetings or survey results.
 The Scheme was discussed at the Care Services Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee: <http://cds.bromley.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=585&MId=4899>

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| 2i | Publishing – if the equality impact assessment forms part of an overall review then the results should be published as part of any report that goes forward to Elected Members. If not the findings of the impact assessment should be published on our Council’s web site. |
| 2j | <p>Training and development - please list any staff training issues that have arisen as a result of conducting the impact assessment</p> <p>A programme of training is being devised for staff within Housing Needs and partner services; Leaving Care, Children’s services. The training will focus on an overall summarising of the changes along with more specific guidance for individual service areas so that officers may support their clients effectively.</p> <p>Add details to action plan</p> |

Stage 3 - GENERIC EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT ACTION PLAN please list actions that you plan to take as a result of this assessment, continuing on a separate sheet if necessary. If appropriate these actions should be added to any business/service plan for the function.

| Issue | Action to be undertaken | Desired outcome | Action owner | Target date |
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Signed:
Date: