

# Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

## Deciding what needs to be assessed

In theory all policies, decisions, services, projects and programmes should be impact assessed. The most practical approach is to assess as the proposal is being developed or as processes, services and policies come up for review making the EQIA part of the development process. Do not be put off by the list below, it does not mean that long and detailed assessments are required every time you are engaged in one of the activities. However, it does mean that you should always consider the equalities implications of your proposals.

### Policy

- New policy development
- Substantial revision of an existing policy or process
- Any change which may have a disproportionate impact on a particular group

### Decision

- Key decision
- Decision for management board/cabinet
- Budget change decision

### Service

- New service
- Service review, including the decommissioning of services
- Any service change which may have a disproportionate impact on a particular group

### Projects and programmes

- All, at planning stage

Further information: [Equality Impact Assessments - a user's guide](#)

#### Section One

	Question	Response
1.1	Name of policy/decision/service/project/programme being assessed	Damp, Condensation & Mould Policy Housing Customer Services

1.2	<b>Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/decision/service/project/programme</b>	<p>The overall purpose of this policy is to promote the health and wellbeing of Swindon Borough Council tenants by effectively and efficiently managing issues related to damp, mould and condensation and maintaining dry homes with healthy internal environment.</p> <p>This policy aims to raise awareness of legislation related to damp and mould and ensure the council's compliance with these legal requirements.</p>
		<p>The Council aims to adopt a data-led approach to reporting damp, condensation and mould by conducting effective investigation of issues of damp and carrying out effective repairs to eradicate damp</p> <p>The vision sets a clear expectation for Housing Services in Swindon of the Council's approach to supporting tenants to live in their homes and fulfil the terms of their tenancy agreement.</p> <p>To accompany the Vision, we have a policy which sets out help and support that can be accessed through the Council, or partners working alongside the council.</p> <p>The final copy of the policy will be subject to the appropriate level of corporate and political scrutiny before being approved for publication.</p>
1.3	<b>Who is affected by the policy/decision/service/project/programme?</b> <i>(e.g. employees/service users/supplier/contractor)</i>	<p>It will affect all Swindon Borough Council tenants, regardless of their background, and the structure of buildings that may contain leaseholders.</p> <p>This policy allows us to be clear with our customers on their expectations and allows us to defend our position if challenged by customers and allow us to manage complaints more effectively.</p>
1.4	<b>What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this proposal?</b> <i>(e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)</i>	<p>A draft version of the policy has been written, in line with national legislation. It has been subject to public, staff, partner and stakeholder engagement.</p> <p>Consultation with Tenants Scrutiny Panel will be undertaken.</p>
1.5	<b>What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?</b>	<p>Swindon Borough Council will regularly review the EqIA, in line with legislative changes or good practice, or if the policy impacts any group directly.</p>

## Section Two - Protected Characteristics

Protected Characteristic Group	Is there a potential for positive or negative impact? Is the impact neutral?	Please explain and give examples of any evidence/data used	Action to address negative impact (e.g. adjustment to the proposal)
Disability	Positive	<p>Our new policy will help to prevent worsening or developing health issues resulting from damp, condensation, and mould, especially for our most vulnerable tenants.</p> <p>People especially negatively impacted by damp, condensation, and mould, are those with the following health conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• existing skin problems, such as atopic eczema</li> <li>• respiratory problems, such as allergies and asthma</li> <li>• a weakened immune system, such as those having chemotherapy</li> </ul> <p>Different approaches and mechanisms may be required for engaging with and representing people with a range of disabilities depending on their individual needs.</p> <p>Consider:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer a range of appointments, e.g. at home, at the office, at a library.</li> <li>• Consider different support needs, e.g. liaise with support workers, make referrals to support agencies.</li> <li>• Include interpretation services where needed.</li> <li>• Use text type telephones.</li> <li>• All staff to receive disability awareness training.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication methods, such as large print or Braille.</li> <li>• Accessibility – venue, location, transport.</li> <li>• Range of support needed to participate.</li> <li>• Hearing Loops and Interpreters.</li> <li>• Disability awareness training for employees.</li> </ul>	
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>	Neutral	<p>There is no evidence to suggest this will impact on any specific person based on this characteristic.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awareness training for employees.</li> </ul>	Swindon Borough Council does not have a trans policy – consider introducing a hate crime policy.
<b>Marriage or Civil Partnership</b>	Neutral	<p>There is no evidence to suggest this will impact on any specific person based on this characteristic.</p>	All couples or partners, regardless of gender, should be able to access services.
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>	Positive	<p>Damp, condensation and mould impact pregnant women and their babies, and newly born children’s health. Adopting our new policy will create a healthy environment for pregnant women and their children.</p> <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexible hours of services.</li> <li>• Is there access to private area for breastfeeding mothers?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be flexible with timings and appointments.</li> <li>• Introduce private area for breastfeeding, if requested.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Race</b></p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>This policy has a positive impact on minority groups as it tackles poverty related factors to DCM. Referrals to Tenancy Sustainment Officers and Neighbourhood Housing Officers are essential to this policy to help tackle issues associated with poverty.</p> <p>Local support services may have differing capabilities around translation and interpretation.</p> <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The size of the BME communities that our service/project affects.</li> <li>• Language(s) spoken/understood.</li> <li>• Culture, such as hygiene, clothing, physical activities, mixed gender activities.</li> <li>• What access support can we offer?</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Religion or Belief</b></p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>There is no evidence to suggest this will impact on any specific person based on this characteristic.</p> <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The diversity within the communities that our services affect.</li> </ul>	<p>Be flexible with appointments, e.g., home visits offered to suit the tenant.</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prayer times, meal times, food (some religions do not eat meat), cultural habit or belief, religious holidays such as Ramadan.</li> <li>Awareness training for employees.</li> </ul>	
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	Neutral	<p>There is no evidence to suggest this will impact on any specific person based on this characteristic.</p> <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make it clear you recognised civil marriage and partnerships.</li> <li>Awareness training for employees.</li> </ul>	<p>Provide ongoing awareness training for employees.</p> <p>Swindon Borough Council Equality policy.</p>
<b>Sex (gender)</b>	Neutral	<p>There is no evidence to suggest this will impact on any specific person based on this characteristic.</p> <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The impact on men and women.</li> <li>Child care/care of other dependants.</li> <li>Mixed/single gender groups/activities.</li> <li>Timing of services/projects.</li> </ul>	Be flexible with appointments.
<b>Age</b>	Positive	Our new policy has a positive impact on older people who may be more likely to have health issues or disabilities exacerbated by damp and mould and will protect babies and children who may be more sensitive to	<p>Accept correspondence in different formats, e.g. email, written, WhatsApp messages, telephone call.</p> <p>Offer a range of appointments, home visits.</p>

		<p>health issues caused by damp and mould.</p> <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The way younger and older people access services may be different.</li> <li>• Use of technology.</li> <li>• Child care/care of another dependant.</li> <li>• Timings/flexibility, such as work patterns.</li> <li>• Transport arrangements.</li> <li>• Venue location.</li> </ul>	<p>Our process for triaging the support people will be related to the seriousness of the damp and mould issues. It will also assist us in identifying children or adults at risk in need of safeguarding support or who might need a social care referral.</p>
<b>Children in Care and Care Leavers</b>	Neutral	<p>There is no evidence to suggest this will impact on any specific person based on this characteristic.</p> <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The way younger and older people access services may be different.</li> <li>• Use of technology.</li> <li>• Child care/care of another dependant.</li> <li>• Timings/flexibility, such as work patterns.</li> <li>• Transport arrangements.</li> <li>• Venue location.</li> </ul>	<p>Accept correspondence in different formats, e.g. email, written, WhatsApp messages, telephone call.</p> <p>Offer a range of appointments, home visits.</p> <p>Cover transport costs for court.</p>

### Section Three- Evaluation

<b>3.1</b>	<b>Is it possible the proposed policy or activity or change in policy or activity could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?</b>	<b>No.</b> The policy provides a transparent framework that SBC will follow to ensure decisions on domestic abuse and procedures that follow are carried out in line with the policy.
------------	---	---

Final Decision:	Tick the relevant box	Include any explanation / justification required
1. No barriers identified, therefore activity will proceed.	✓	The policy provides a transparent framework that SBC will follow to ensure decisions on domestic abuse and procedures that follow are carried out in line with the policy.
2. Stop at some point because the data shows bias towards one or more groups		
3. Adapt or change the event in a way which you think will eliminate the bias		
4. Barriers and impact have been identified, however having considered all available options carefully, there appear to be no other proportionate ways to achieve the aim of the policy or practice (e.g. in extreme cases or where positive action is taken). Therefore, proceed with caution with this knowing that it may favour some people less than others, providing justification for this decision.		



## Section Four – Record Keeping

Will this EqIA be published* (*EqIA's should be published alongside relevant event paperwork including cabinet papers:	<b>Yes/Not required</b>
Date Completed	
Review date (if applicable)	

### Change Log

Name	Date	Version	Change Made

<b>Responsibilities</b>			
<b>Name of person leading this EqIA</b>	Stuart Hook	<b>Date Completed</b>	07/08/2024
<b>Names and roles of people involved in the consideration of impact</b>	Sttuart Hook	Andrew McDonald	Sally Nelson
<b>Name of Director signing EqIA</b>	Chris Stratford	<b>Date Signed</b>	30-08-24