

Community impact assessments – for services, policies and projects

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What is a community impact assessment?

A community impact assessment is an important part of our commitment to delivering better services for our communities. The form will help us find out what impact or consequences our functions, policies, procedures and projects have on our communities, as well as employees and potential employees.

By undertaking an impact assessment, we are able to:

1. Take into account the needs, experiences and circumstances of those groups of people who use (or don't / can't use) our services.
2. Identify any inequalities people may experience.
3. Think about the other ways in which we can deliver our services which will not lead to inequalities.
4. Develop better policy-making, procedures and services.

Background

Name of service / policy / project and date	Housing, Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-28
Lead officer	Martin Stacy, Housing Strategy & Partnerships Manager

Other people involved in completing this form	
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Step 1: About the service, policy or project

What is the aim of the service / policy / project and what outcomes is it contributing to	<p>Our Housing, Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-28 sets out our key priorities over the next 5 years. These priorities focus on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing the provision of quality, sustainable and affordable housing; • Making best use of existing housing; • Reducing homelessness; • Tackling rough sleeping; and • Investing in our communities so that they remain safe, strong and healthy <p>Each of these priorities is underpinned by a range of goals or objectives, which in turn are supported by a number of key activities and initiatives. These are set out in the strategy itself, with further detail provided in the accompanying action plan.</p> <p>This strategy is aligned with our Corporate Plan 2023-27.</p>
Who are the primary customers of the service / policy / project and how do they / will they benefit	<p>Tenants and leaseholders living in Cheltenham Borough Council (CBC) owned accommodation, and managed on our behalf by Cheltenham Borough Homes (CBH). Households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness, and those who are rough sleeping. Households who are in housing need, regardless of their tenure. Households who are in poor quality housing, particularly in the private rented sector.</p>
How and where is the service / policy / project implemented	<p>Our strategy will be implemented in accordance with our action plan. Key elements of the plan will be delivered and implemented by CBH, who manage CBC-owned accommodation on our behalf, and who also manage our Housing Options Service. CBC also commissions other organisations, either directly or jointly (with other districts across the council) to deliver rough sleeping services and other services that help to prevent homelessness (such as benefit and debt advice). In addition, some services are delivered directly by CBC – for example: enforcing standards in the private rented sector, and some community development activities running alongside CBH's work.</p>
What potential barriers might already exist to achieving these outcomes	<p>There are many challenges, and these are highlighted within the Housing, Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy. These are not necessarily 'barriers' but they need to be acknowledged and understood, as they can impact on the pace of delivery.</p>

Step 2: What do you already know about your existing and potential customers?

<p>What existing information and data do you have about your existing / potential customers e.g. Statistics, customer feedback, performance information</p>	<p>CBH regularly collects tenant insight data, which is used to inform activity on an ongoing basis but also provides insight to inform opportunities for future improvement, such as:</p> <p>Customer insight was derived through a multifaceted tenant consultation on the business plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 years of tenant insight data • 2000 tenants asked 'what can CBH do to improve' • 5 broad & diverse focus groups • 45 tenants engaged in focus group <p>Equally, performance data is collated from other commissioned services, including from CBH's Housing Options Service, rough sleeping support services, and our debt, benefits and housing rights service.</p> <p>In addition, CBC will collate data regarding the quality of homes in the private rented sector.</p> <p>Our Housing, Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy captures a wide range of data, which we have used to help inform our priorities.</p>
<p>What does it tell you about who uses your service / policy and those that don't?</p>	<p>The focus of our strategy is on alleviating the housing need of our residents. This can be directly by, for instance, making their homes safer, or by rehousing them into alternative accommodation; or indeed indirectly, by ensuring that residents feel safer, healthier and more active in their communities, thereby helping to alleviate future emerging housing needs.</p> <p>Residents have many ways to seek help regarding their housing need, either by approaching their landlord, local independent advice services, their local councillor and CBC directly. All of these avenues will enable them to navigate their way to appropriate advice and support services. In addition, there is proactive work, such as community activities undertaken both by CBC and CBH where services are taken directly to our residents.</p>
<p>What have you learnt about real barriers to your service from any consultation with customers and any stakeholder groups?</p>	<p>Consultation has been undertaken, both on the development of the priorities of the strategy, and also on the final draft. This have been undertaken with a wide range of people and organisations, such as the Housing & Support Forum, Affordable Housing Partnership, Ward Councillors, and with the public at large.</p> <p>The nature of the services proposed and currently provided are such that focus is on supporting vulnerable households in particular. Services are designed to ensure vulnerable people are able to engage, and are supported to engage where needed. For instance, our rough sleeping services focus on building relationships with individuals who can have complex needs, with a view to helping them to engage with housing and support services. Our commissioned advice service also helps individuals in housing need to explore their housing rights, and to represent them where appropriate, when issues need to be taken further, for example with their landlord. Our Housing Options Services also has a number of Interventions Officers, whose focus is on engaging with individuals that might otherwise not engage fully with services.</p>
<p>If not, who do you have plans to consult with about the service / policy / project?</p>	



Step 3: Assessing community impact

How does your service, policy or project impact on different groups in the community? Please outline what you are already doing to benefit this group, what you are doing that might disadvantage this group, what you could do differently to benefit the group.

People from black and minority ethnic groups

People who are male or female

People who are transitioning from one gender to another

Older people / children and young people

People with disabilities and mental health challenges

People who have a particular religion or belief

People who are attracted to their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.

People who are married or in a Civil Partnership

People who are pregnant or who are on maternity leave

Other groups or communities

The nature of the services proposed and currently provided are such that focus is on supporting vulnerable households in particular. Services are designed to ensure vulnerable people are able to engage, and are supported to engage where needed. For instance, our rough sleeping services focus on building relationships with individuals who can have complex needs, with a view to helping them to engage with housing and support services. Our commissioned advice service also helps individuals in housing need to explore their housing rights, and to represent them where appropriate, when issues need to be taken further, for example with their landlord. Our Housing Options Services also has a number of Interventions Officers, whose focus is on engaging with individuals that might otherwise not engage fully with services.

Step 4: What are the differences?

Are any groups affected in different ways to others as a result of the service / policy / project?	No, the aim of our Housing, Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy is to deliver positive benefit for all residents
Does your service / policy / project either directly or indirectly discriminate?	No, our Housing, Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy does not discriminate either directly or indirectly
If yes, what can be done to improve this?	N/A
Are there any other ways in which the service / project can help support priority communities in Cheltenham?	As highlighted above, our strategy is wide ranging, supporting households in housing need. These households can have a range of different vulnerabilities. As such services are designed with an understanding of this in mind. Our strategy also has a focus on delivering strong and sustainable communities in which all residents can benefit from life chances. Our strategy includes projects which aim to provide support with cost of living for the most vulnerable customers.

Step 5: Taking things forward

What are the key actions to be carried out and how will they be resourced and monitored?	
Who will play a role in the decision-making process?	

What are your / the project's learning and development needs?	
How will you capture these actions in your service / project planning?	