



Equality Impact Assessment

The purpose of an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is to improve the work of Orkney Islands Council by making sure it promotes equality and does not discriminate. This assessment records the likely impact of any changes to a function, policy or plan by anticipating the consequences, and making sure that any negative impacts are eliminated or minimised and positive impacts are maximised.

1. Identification of Function, Policy or Plan	
Name of function / policy / plan to be assessed.	Local Housing Strategy
Service / service area responsible.	Education Leisure and Housing
Name of person carrying out the assessment and contact details.	Frances Troup Head of Community Learning, Leisure and Housing 01856 873535 ext 2450 frances.troup@orkney.gov.uk
Date of assessment.	10 January 2024
Is the function / policy / plan new or existing? (Please indicate also if the service is to be deleted, reduced or changed significantly).	New for 2024 Covers period 2024/25-2029/30

2. Initial Screening	
What are the intended outcomes of the function / policy / plan?	<p>The Local Housing Strategy (LHS) sets out the housing vision of the Council and its strategic partners for the future of housing across all tenures and types of accommodation, taking account of national priorities as well as local needs.</p> <p>It is based on a detailed Housing Needs and Demand Assessment and statistical analysis of figures on population and economy.</p>

	<p>The main purpose of the Strategy is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the housing needs of all persons in the area, across all housing tenures drawing on the Housing Need and Demand Assessment 2023. • Develop strategies to meet those needs; • Set out the priorities and actions required for new housing supply including investment requirements, housing quality including energy efficiency, fuel poverty and the drive to net zero, and access to housing for all households.
<p>Is the function / policy / plan strategically important?</p>	<p>Yes. The Local Housing Strategy is a statutory requirement as set out in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and is the key strategic document covering housing across all housing tenures, and all housing needs of Orkney's residents and future residents. Adequate housing supply is a key enabling infrastructure to sustain and develop Orkney's different communities.</p>
<p>State who is, or may be affected by this function / policy / plan, and how.</p>	<p>The Local Housing Strategy has implications potentially for the whole population as it crosses all housing tenures. Specific aspects of the strategy will also have a particular impact on specific equalities groups within the population.</p>
<p>How have stakeholders been involved in the development of this function / policy / plan?</p>	<p>The Housing Needs and Demand Assessment and the draft Local Housing Strategy has been developed over 12 months January to December 2023 through the Orkney Housing Market Partnership which encompasses the Council's Member Officer Working Group. It comprises a range of stakeholders including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orkney Islands Council Elected Members • Orkney Islands Council - Education, Leisure & Housing; Neighbourhood Services & Infrastructure; Enterprise & Sustainable Regeneration; Strategy, Performance & Business Solutions; Orkney Health & Care. • Orkney Housing Association (OHAL) • Orkney College UHI • The Development Trusts' housing consultant • Highland & Islands Enterprise (HIE) • Housebuilders • NHS Orkney • Scottish Government More Homes Division • Scottish Water

	<p>The Partnership held 8 meetings between January and December 2023 to oversee production of the Housing Needs and Demand Assessment, and then to develop the Local Housing Strategy. This process involved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of Housing Strategy topic papers and presentations • Workshops on each topic with a total of 20 break out groups over the development period including a total of 45 stakeholders. Most Partnership members attended multiple workshops. <p>The Housing Market Partnership’s work built on wider community consultation led by the Council in late 2021 and early 2022 – ‘Orkney Matters’, with findings feeding into the Housing Need and Demand Assessment, and the Local Housing Strategy development. The focus was on community and place with questions asked on what’s working, what’s not working so well and what would the community like to improve. The engagement was through survey, online consultation, and art workshops for harder to reach groups. This project involved all Council teams including the Housing Service and partner agencies from Orkney’s Community Planning Partnership.</p> <p>The Local Housing Strategy consultative draft has been issued for public consultation with a questionnaire to ask for feedback on the housing vision, priorities, outcomes and actions. The consultative draft will be disseminated through proactive media engagement with the established network of organisations and community groups including Community Councils and the Development Trusts. Separate consultation took place with the 10 Development Trusts during the production of the Housing Needs and Demand Assessment. The Development Trusts’ housing consultant is also a member of the Housing Market Partnership and there will be a presentation to the Development Trusts on the draft Housing Strategy. Findings from the consultation will be reported and integrated into the final strategy.</p>
<p>Is there any existing data and / or research relating to equalities issues in this policy area? Please summarise.</p>	<p>There is significant research into equality, diversity and inclusion issues in relation to the most vulnerable people in our society and the wider area of housing. This includes, but is not limited</p>

<p>E.g. consultations, national surveys, performance data, complaints, service user feedback, academic / consultants' reports, benchmarking (see equalities resources on OIC information portal).</p>	<p>to, reports produced by the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group in relation to impacts on homeless households and separately the Joseph Rowntree Foundation around housing condition and poverty.</p> <p>However, Scottish housing legislation and policy including the Scottish Government's Equalities Position Statement and Scottish Housing Regulator's approach to equalities ensure public authorities give due regard to elimination of discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. Processes are in place which require that where any negative impacts are identified, action is taken to seek to address and mitigate these.</p>
<p>Is there any existing evidence relating to socio-economic disadvantage and inequalities of outcome in this policy area? Please summarise.</p> <p>E.g. For people living in poverty or for people of low income. See The Fairer Scotland Duty Guidance for Public Bodies for further information.</p>	<p>There is significant research indicating that low income households living in the social housing sector, private rented sector and some owners, and homeless households suffer socio-economic disadvantage and fuel poverty. This is more acute for rough sleepers although the incidence of this is low in Orkney. The provision of housing or lack of it is recognised as being intrinsically linked to a range of indicators related to health, wealth and educational achievement.</p> <p>The Joseph Rowntree Foundation has produced a range of research focussing on poverty and disadvantage and the links between this and housing and homelessness. Research such as this relates directly to the introduction of the Fairer Scotland Duty.</p>
<p>Could the function / policy have a differential impact on any of the following equality areas?</p>	<p>(Please provide any evidence – positive impacts / benefits, negative impacts and reasons).</p>
<p>1. Race: this includes ethnic or national groups, colour and nationality.</p>	<p>Some ethnic groups may require access to information, advice and support in particular languages or formats. The Local Housing Strategy will promote and provide for this via the Housing Options service and the Council has an Accessibility Strategy.</p> <p>The requirement for Gypsy/Traveller sites, pitches and support services is assessed and monitored via the Housing Need and Demand Assessment</p>

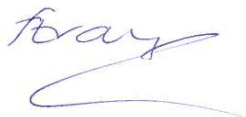
	<p>and Local Housing Strategy – there is no requirement currently identified but the Local Housing Strategy monitoring process will ensure this is reviewed annually.</p> <p>The Local Housing Strategy must adhere to legislation regarding unlawful discrimination therefore no negative impact is identified.</p> <p>Any specific ethnic groups requiring particular accommodation are treated equitably with any other mainstream household.</p>
<p>2. Sex: a man or a woman.</p>	<p>The Local Housing Strategy promotes equality of opportunity and will ensure that the housing and housing related service needs of all are addressed, including those fleeing domestic abuse (who tend to predominantly female) and homeless households where single males are more significantly represented than single females or families.</p>
<p>3. Sexual Orientation: whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.</p>	<p>No specific impact identified.</p>
<p>4. Gender Reassignment: the process of transitioning from one gender to another.</p>	<p>No specific impact identified.</p>
<p>5. Pregnancy and maternity.</p>	<p>No specific impact identified. Housing policies reflect the needs of this group appropriately.</p>
<p>6. Age: people of different ages.</p>	<p>There are various housing issues that affect the ageing population particularly in relation to mobility, disability and the requirement for accessible housing and related care and support.</p> <p>Fuel poverty also tends to be most extreme amongst older people that may be living in larger and more traditional housing, particularly in more rural and remote locations which are more exposed to harsh climates.</p> <p>Homelessness can affect disproportionate numbers of young people and there is a need for an island authority to ensure it has policies to assist in the active retention of younger people for economic growth and community sustainability.</p> <p>Through research and analysis of the Housing Need and Demand Assessment, the needs of various age groups have been identified and the Local Housing Strategy contains specific actions and targets to address these through the provision</p>

	<p>of specialist accommodation and care and support services.</p> <p>Children – the Housing Need and Demand Assessment set out the demographic profile of Orkney, and the Strategy refers to and is aligned with the Orkney Child Poverty Strategy. Housing policies take into account the needs of families, and the fuel poverty strategy contained within the LHS sets out action to address fuel poverty which will involve lower income families.</p>
7. Religion or beliefs or none (atheists).	No specific impacts identified.
8. Caring responsibilities.	No specific impacts identified, other than those addressed under “age” above or disability below.
9. Care experienced.	No specific impacts identified. Young care experienced people may be disproportionately likely to suffer from homelessness but the Council has a protocol on Young People Leaving Care which addresses this.
10. Marriage and Civil Partnerships.	No specific impacts identified.
11. Disability: people with disabilities (whether registered or not).	<p>The Local Housing Strategy has been developed to promote equality of opportunity for people who with disabilities whether physical or learning. Accommodation, care and support needs have been assessed in detail via the Housing Need and Demand Assessment process and a key priority of the strategy relates to supporting independent living at home or in a homely setting through care and support, and/or appropriate specialist provision. This will include appropriate housing, a range of aids and adaptations and telecare services among other measures. Where gaps in the evidence base were identified, research was carried out.</p> <p>Orkney Health and Care, the Integrated Joint Board and NHS Orkney are key partners in the Housing Market Partnership with responsibility identified in the delivery action plan where relevant.</p>
12. Socio-economic disadvantage.	Socio-economic disadvantage is likely to be more prevalent amongst homeless households than other groups within society and households experiencing fuel poverty would be likely to suffer from socio-economic disadvantage more generally. The Local Housing Strategy’s specific priorities are intended to assist in addressing this and other forms of socio-economic disadvantage.

3. Impact Assessment	
Does the analysis above identify any differential impacts which need to be addressed?	Yes there is a potential greater impact identified as a result of race, sex, age, care experience, disability, socio-economic disadvantage and islands proofing. These have been addressed throughout the EQiA. A separate Islands Communities Impact Assessment has been undertaken.
How could you minimise or remove any potential negative impacts?	The Local Housing Strategy is specifically intended to focus on housing need and demand across a range of tenures and household need. These are addressed through the 3 priorities – More Homes, Quality Warm Homes, and Access and Choice of Housing for all and the associated actions plans.
Do you have enough information to make a judgement? If no, what information do you require?	Yes

4. Conclusions and Planned Action	
Is further work required?	No.
What action is to be taken?	N/A
Who will undertake it?	N/A
When will it be done?	N/A
How will it be monitored? (e.g. through service plans).	The Local Housing Strategy Delivery Action Plan will be monitoring through the Housing Market Partnership on a quarterly basis and reported formerly on an annual basis to the Partnership and the Council.

Date: 15 January 2024



Signature:

Name: FRANCES TROUP

(BLOCK CAPITALS).

Please sign and date this form, keep one copy and send a copy to HR and Performance. A Word version should also be emailed to HR and Performance at hrsupport@orkney.gov.uk