

Equalities Analysis Assessment

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Date	06/06/2023	Service	Housing Improvement and Assistance

1. The project or decision that this assessment is being undertaken for:

The Private Sector Housing Agency (PSHA) has responsibility for improving housing conditions in the private housing sector in the borough. The key aims of the housing assistance policy are to improve health outcomes and promote independent living; improve the stock and energy efficiency in the private rented sector; reduce the number of empty properties and assist residents to adapt their homes to their changing needs. There are 10 main grants and loans schemes that are administered by Lewisham Council.

Mayor and Cabinet approved the current version of the Housing Assistance Policy in January 2019. A number of changes to the Housing Assistance Policy have been proposed. The main changes include:

- The introduction of the Hospital Prevention and Discharge Grant and the Renewable Energy Systems Grant
- An increase in grant, loan and fee amounts to take into account the present-day costs of materials and works. No grant or loan amounts are being reduced.
- The current policy is a 55-page long document and officers have proposed changes to create a shorter, clearer and more user-friendly version for applicants.

This assessment covers the changes laid out in the accompanying report and appendices.

2. The protected characteristics or other equalities factors potentially impacted by this decision

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Race	<input type="checkbox"/> Maternity and pregnancy	<input type="checkbox"/> Marriage and civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
<input type="checkbox"/> Gender	<input type="checkbox"/> Gender reassignment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability		
<input type="checkbox"/> Religion or belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carer status	<input type="checkbox"/> Sexual orientation		

The policy being considered for adoption provides a range of grant and loan assistance to home owners and private rented sector tenants in Lewisham. The aims of the policy are to improve health outcomes and promote independent living; improve the stock and energy efficiency in the private rented sector; reduce the number of empty properties and assist residents to adapt their homes to their changing needs. This includes a range of assistance provide safe, warm and decent homes for older, vulnerable or disabled residents living in private sector accommodation. The policy explicitly references support available that would be specifically targeted at groups with protected characteristics, in particular people with disabilities or older residents.

3. The evidence to support the analysis

The evidence to support this equality analysis assessment has come from a range of data both at National and Local levels, including:

1. **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2021** -Lewisham completed a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment in 2021 which describes the population of Lewisham in terms of the key health and socio-demographic characteristics, including mortality, morbidity, ethnicity and inequalities. The JSNA is updated with new information, evidence and intelligence as it becomes available and as new issues and gaps are identified.
2. **National census 2021** - The national census was published in July 2022. The census is undertaken by the Office for National Statistics every 10 years and provides a picture of all the people and households in each local authority area. It provides a summary of changes in age, nationality, ethnicity, disability and private renting, amongst others.
3. **Service user profile data** - Other key data used for this assessment is the service-user profile – i.e. those applying for housing assistance or on the social housing register. Applicants, however, are not required to enter data on protected characteristics in their service-user profile. Therefore the

council has limited data on the protected characteristics of those applying for assistance under this policy.

The analysis

Age

Census Age	2011 %	2021 %
85 years and over	1.3	1.2
75 to 84 years	3.3	3
65 to 74 years	4.9	5.4
50 to 64 years	13.4	17.3
35 to 49 years	24.1	24
25 to 34 years	20	19.4
20 to 24 years	7.6	6.3
16 to 19 years	4.7	4.1
10 to 15 years	6.7	6.9
5 to 9 years	6	6
4 years and under	8	6.4

- Between the last two censuses, the average (median) age of Lewisham increased by two years, from 33 to 35 years of age.
- Lewisham has a young population bias. Between 2011 and 2021, there has been an increase of 9.8% in people aged 65 years and over, an increase of 10.8% in people aged 15 to 64 years, and an increase of 1.8% in children aged under 15 years.

Disability

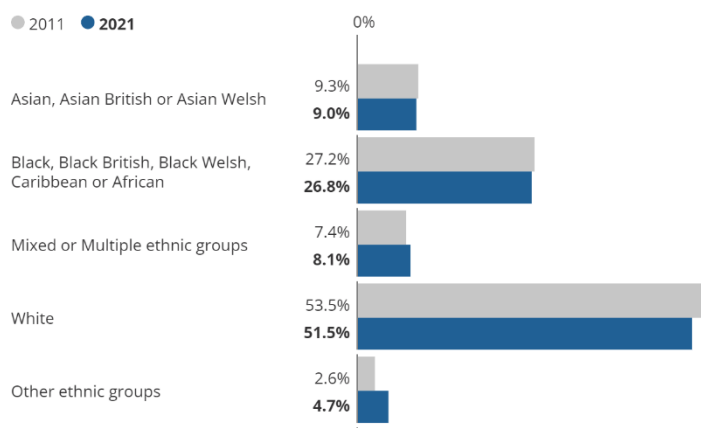
- 14.5% of residents in Lewisham are living with a long term condition which limits their daily activities. This is slightly below the England average of 17.6%, however this is likely to be due to the younger population bias.
- In 2021, 7.9% of Lewisham residents were identified as being disabled and limited a lot. This figure decreased from 10.6% in 2011. Comparatively, the proportion of households on the housing register who have declared a disability is higher, at 16% (1,675).
- Data on the primary reasons for housing assistance applications was not available, however the table below summarises the primary reasons for housing adaptations required for households on the housing register.

Housing register applications requiring adaptations	
Fully wheelchair adapted accommodation	28
Adaptations approved by OT	109
Wet room or level access shower	51
Ramped Access	20
Stair lift	14
Additional toilet	10
Parking bay	23
Door Entry System	20
Lowered kitchen surfaces	18
Through floor lift	6
Hoist	3
Shower	29
Hardstanding	3
Other adaptation	46

Ethnicity

- In 2021, 51.5% of people in Lewisham identified their ethnic group within the "White" category (compared with 53.5% in 2011), while 26.8% identified their ethnic group within the "Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African" category (compared with 27.2% the previous decade).
- The data regarding the ethnicity of applicants on the general Housing Register and amongst those applying for housing adaptations is limited, however we hold high quality data about the ethnicity of residents who make an application of homelessness, which shows that over half of homeless households have been from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic households.

Percentage of usual residents by ethnic group, Lewisham



Source: Office for National Statistics – 2011 Census and Census 2021

Carer Status

- There is no data for carers within the housing assistance, housing register or homelessness applications.

Religion

- This data field was not available for housing assistance applications, so meaningful analysis is not possible.
- In 2021, 36.7% of Lewisham residents reported having "No religion", up from 27.2% in 2011. The rise of 9.5 percentage points was the largest increase of all broad religious groups in Lewisham. Because the census question about religious affiliation is voluntary and has varying response rates, caution is needed when comparing figures between different areas or between censuses.

Sexuality

- This data field was not available for housing assistance applications, so meaningful analysis is not possible.
- Across Lewisham, 2.7% of those aged 16+ identified as LGBT. Of those who have disclosed their sexual orientation on the housing register, less than 5% have identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual or other.

Marriage or civil partnership

- Of Lewisham residents aged 16 years and over, 53.4% said they had never been married or in a civil partnership in 2021, up from 49.7% in 2011.

Impact summary

Disability

- The Policy specifically meets the needs of people with disabilities and seeks to maximise the use of the mandatory and discretionary funding to provide a diverse range of housing to meet the needs of

residents. Increasing the availability of much-needed home adaptations will have a positive impact on people with disabilities.

- Disabled Facilities Grants are specifically available to those individuals who are registered or capable of being registered as disabled. Eligibility guidance is laid down in Government guidance.
- Reviewing and improving supported housing pathways will have a positive impact on the people with disabilities who are within these units.
- **The overall impact is assessed as positive.**

Age

- The Policy specifically meets the needs of older people who are more likely to have limited mobility and require alterations and adaptations to stay in their homes.
- Whilst under 18s cannot apply for loan assistance as they are not eligible to own a property in their own right, where the application is for a disabled child or young person under the age of 19 there is no financial means test.
- **The overall impact is assessed as positive.**

Ethnicity

- There is no evidence to suggest any impact on this group. The policy seeks to improve access and standards of living accommodation across all tenures for people with disabilities. Any work under this policy will aim to have a positive impact on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups that currently experience disparity in outcomes.

Carer Status

- There is no evidence to suggest any impact on this group. The policy will improve access to and movement around the home, to enable the disabled person to care for themselves or another person who lives in the property, such as a spouse, child or other person for whom the disabled person cares.

Maternity

- There is no evidence to suggest any impact on this group. Service is available to all and individual solutions will be considered to meet specific needs

Gender

- There is no evidence to suggest any impact on this group. Service is available to all and individual solutions will be considered to meet specific needs

Gender identity

- There is no evidence to suggest any impact on this group. Service is available to all and individual solutions will be considered to meet specific needs

Marriage or civil partnership

- There is no evidence to suggest any impact on this group. Service is available to all and individual solutions will be considered to meet specific needs

Religion

- There is no evidence to suggest any impact on this group. Service is available to all and individual solutions will be considered to meet specific needs

Sexual orientation

- There is no evidence to suggest any impact on this group. Service is available to all and individual solutions will be considered to meet specific needs

4. Mitigation

No negative impacts have been identified within the refresh of the Housing Assistance Policy, and therefore no mitigating actions are needed.

Enhanced data collection regarding protected characteristics of those applying for housing assistance grants and loans would help inform future equalities impact assessments and identify gaps in service or

impacts.

5. Service user journey that this decision or project impacts

Enquiries can be made by contacting the Housing Improvement and Assistance team via the Council's website or in writing.

Before the Council can decide whether to approve or refuse a housing assistance application, the applicant must submit a 'valid application'. An applicant is considered to have made a valid application when:

- they submit all the information referred to under 'How to Apply' in each section
- the Council are satisfied that they have all necessary information on which to base a decision.

**Signature of
Head of Service**



For further information please see the full [Corporate Equality Policy](#).