

Equalities Analysis Assessment

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

The review of the councils Homelessness Strategy and adoption of a new three year Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.

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

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

The strategy being considered for adoption provides high-level directions to drive the council towards achieving its objectives. Whilst the strategy itself is high-level, it includes the adoption of a series of actions and activities that will be followed that may have an impact on any of the above protected characteristics. This assessment covers the broad approaches laid out in the strategy.

The strategy also explicitly references some priorities and deliverables that would be specifically targeted at groups with protected characteristics; these are aimed at ensuring we are offering appropriate and effective services for people with the noted characteristics. For the purposes of illustration, one strategic deliverable is to “Review our female-specific provision for women sleeping rough with complex needs” – this would specifically relate to the provision of homes and support for people with a specific gender and can therefore be considered a positive impact. Other related priorities and deliverables are explored below.

3. The evidence to support the analysis

The key data used for this assessment is the service-user profile – i.e. those applying for housing support and currently accommodated in temporary accommodation. Much of this information is provided as part of a housing application and has been sourced from the in-house system.

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 applicants, so we are unable to provide a detailed assessment of the impact, or forecast the impact with a significant degree of confidence.

- **The analysis**

Age

Homelessness applications Age Range	%
Less than 18	1%
18-25	23%
26-35	28%
36-40	12%
41-50	18%
51-60	12%
More than 60	5%
Total	100%

- The most represented age bracket in homelessness applications is 26-35.
- A clear trend when reviewing change over time is the increase in the number of applicants for people with support needs related to young people and care leavers.

Support Need	19-20	20-21	21-22	% change
Young parent requiring support to manage independently	17	27	35	+106%
At risk of/has experienced abuse (non-domestic)	151	213	277	+83%
Young person aged 16-17 years	43	48	73	+70%
Young person aged 18-25 years requiring support to manage independently	115	134	184	+60%
Care leaver aged 21+ years	42	36	62	+48%

Ethnicity

Homelessness applications ethnicity	%
Any other Asian background	2.60%
Any other Black/African/Caribbean background	2.79%
Any other ethnic group	2.68%
Any other Mixed/Multiple ethnic background	1.64%
Any other White background	5.77%
Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi	0.32%
Asian/Asian British: Chinese	0.29%
Asian/Asian British: Indian	0.40%
Asian/Asian British: Pakistani	0.40%
Black/ African/Caribbean/Black British: African	19.92%
Black/ African/Caribbean/Black British: Caribbean	19.31%
Don't know / refused	6.25%
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian	0.32%
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black African	1.69%
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean	4.77%
Other ethnic group: Arab	1.02%
White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	18.56%
White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.11%
White: Irish	0.48%
Blank	10.67%
Grand Total	100.00%

- We hold high quality data about the ethnicity of residents who make an application of homelessness, as this is collected by officers from the applicants.
- This shows that over half of homeless households have been from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic households.

Maternity

- **3.69%** of the lead tenants were known to be pregnant at the time of the most recent change in their application status.

Gender

Female	54.14%
Male	44.22%
Transgender	0.24%
Unknown	0.32%

(blank)	1.07%
Total	100%

- **54%** of applicants were female, **44%** male, and **0.2%** transgender.
- This ratio is much more even than that observed for temporary accommodation, which skews heavily female. This is most likely because there are more single women with dependent children owed a long term homelessness duty (as dependent children is indicative of a priority need).
- Female applicants have a different profile of reasons for application, in particular domestic abuse.

Gender identity

- There is no data available for gender identity within homeless applicants.

Disability

Primary Disability Declared in Homelessness Applicants	Count
Physical impairment or mobility issues	110
Mental Health Condition	93
Long standing illness or health problem	46
Blind or serious visual impairment	16
General Learning Disability	14
Deaf or serious hearing impairment	13
Specific Learning Disability	13

- This data field was highly incomplete for homelessness applications, so meaningful analysis is not possible.
- 7% of applicants on the housing register have declared a disability.
- As of November 2022, there were 77 households on the housing register who require a home that is wheelchair accessible and 186 households who require an adapted property to meet their needs. Due to the shortage of supply of such homes, the waiting times for these households are likely to be longer than average.

Religion

Religion	%
Christian	49.6%
No religion	32.4%
Muslim	13.6%
Other religion	2.3%
Hindu	1.5%
Buddhist	0.3%
Jewish	0.3%
Grand Total	100.00%

- This data field was highly incomplete for homelessness applications, so meaningful analysis is not possible.
- Of the 663 remaining individuals who have disclosed a religion, almost a half have identified as Christian. The next most prevalent declaration is 'no religion', followed by Muslim. This data field was highly incomplete for homelessness applications, so meaningful analysis is not possible.

Household type

- Single people continue to be the most represented in those applying as homeless (58% of all applications in 2021/22) followed by households with children (39% in 2021/22). When looking in more detail, the two most common type of applicants are single adult males and single female parents with dependent children. This ratio skews more heavily towards households with children when reviewing numbers in temporary accommodation, due to the priority need status given to households with dependent children.

Household Type	19-20	%	20-21	%	21-22	%
Single Person	1,453	51%	2,036	65%	2,175	58%
Household with children	1,261	45%	994	32%	1,463	39%
Adults with no children	67	2%	35	1%	83	2%
Unknown	52	2%	55	2%	2%	0%

Carer status

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

Sexual orientation

How would you define your sexual orientation?	Percentage
Heterosexual / Straight	95.3%
Gay / Lesbian	2.5%
Other sexual orientation	1.7%
Bisexual	0.5%

- Of those who have disclosed their sexual orientation, 95% have identified as straight / heterosexual.
- Less than 5% have identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual or other.

Income

- Low-income households spend a larger proportion than average on energy and food, so are affected by price increases.
- The employment rate (78.2%) in Lewisham is comparable to the London average.
- Our average income is the 8th lowest out of 33 London boroughs, leaving many of our residents more vulnerable to changes in circumstance.
- Data shows a significant number of households in Lewisham are living in fuel poverty, particularly in Rushey Green, Hither Green, and Downham.

4. Impact summary

- Age
 - Ensuring that the needs of vulnerable children and young people are properly addressed within our service provision is in line with the corporate priority of “ensuring the most vulnerable children are protected from harm”. Actions deriving from this priority will have a positive impact on children and young people.
 - Increasing the availability of much-needed specialist accommodation will have a positive impact on older residents who are more likely to need such housing.
- Ethnicity
 - Data shows that Black ethnic groups are disproportionately represented in the homeless applicant extract. Additionally Black African groups are disproportionately represented in the cohort of overcrowded homes within our own stock.
 - Work needs to be done towards ensuring Housing policies and action plans drive positive changes in promoting equality and fighting injustice, and this is a priority of the Housing strategy.
 - Any strategic work under this priority will aim to have a positive impact on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups that currently experience disparity in outcomes.
- Maternity
 - Pregnancy is an indicator of priority housing need; therefore any strategic decisions relating to housing allocations may have an impact and should therefore be considered with this cohort in mind.
- Language spoken

- Users of Lewisham’s Housing Services come from diverse backgrounds and consideration must be given to language needs; i.e. use of translation services and ensuring relevant documents are written in plain English.
- Gender
 - Data suggests women are overrepresented in the homeless applicant cohort. Strategic action to effectively address homelessness will therefore have a positive impact on these applicants.
 - Ensuring appropriate solutions are available for people fleeing domestic abuse will have a positive impact on the women who make up the majority of this cohort.
 - Action to address rough sleeping will positively impact the men who make up the majority of this cohort.
- Gender identity
 - There is no evidence to suggest any impact on this group.
- Disability
 - Increasing the availability of much-needed specialist accommodation will have a positive impact on people with disabilities would benefit from this type of home.
 - Reviewing and improving supported housing pathways will have a positive impact on the people with disabilities who are within these units.
 - Working to increase the take-up of Disabled Facilities Grants will help people with disabilities remain in their home, which is a positive impact.
- Household type
 - Delivering homes that address the needs of our residents, whether that be social, private or temporary accommodation, is a strategic priority. The prevalence of all household types need to be considered in the provision of homes – for example if the majority of homeless households need 3-bed houses, our focus should be on the delivery / procurement of such properties (this is an over-simplification but highlights the need to assess need in line with delivery).
- Religion
 - There is no evidence to suggest any impact on this group. Delivery of specific priorities should take into account any cultural or religious sensitivities.
- Carer
 - The implications of any strategic deliveries on carers or those who are cared for must be considered. There is no evidence to suggest any impact on this group, however the strategy alludes to monitoring the implementation of the new band 2 criteria for homeless households with additional needs. This includes those who are carers or cared for.
- Sexual orientation
 - There is no evidence to suggest any impact on this group.
- Income
 - The entire delivery of housing and homelessness strategies will have significant impact on those on low incomes. We know that incomes have not kept pace with house prices or rents, which is a key cause of the housing crisis.
 - One of the five priorities of the housing strategy is helping people to access accommodation. This includes delivering more social rented homes, increasing the supply of private rented homes available to low-income households and improving the standards of temporary accommodation. Any activity under these priorities should have a positive impact on low-income households.

5. Mitigation

This Equalities Analysis Assessment recognises that the implementation of the policy will have a greater impact on specific groups because they have a higher representation within the overall service user profile. However, as explained in section 1, the strategy being considered for adoption provides high-level directions to drive the service and the Council towards achieving its objectives. Specific procedural changes and / or reviews will come about as a result of the adoption of the strategy and the impact of these specific activities on groups with protected

characteristics will be mitigated by the individual assessment carried out in each case. This assessment is a high-level review of the possible effects of the strategic direction of Housing Services.

6. Service user journey that this decision or project impacts

If you think you may become homeless, you should contact the Council for advice at the earliest opportunity on our freephone number 0808 178 0939. The earlier you contact us the more chance we have of helping you to avoid becoming homeless.

If you want to join the housing register you can do this by referring to our information on the website www.lewisham.gov.uk

If you are vulnerable (for example you are elderly, have learning or other disability, or do not have the ability to read English or another language) we can assist you in accessing housing and bidding for properties. The **Lewisham Find Your Home Support Officer**, based in the Allocations and Lettings Service, assists applicants to engage with the choice based lettings system and can assist clients with bidding. Please contact the Allocations and Lettings Service for further information on 020 8314 7007 or LewishamFindYourHomeApplications@lewisham.gov.uk.

**Signature of
Head of Service**

Ellie Eghtedar

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