

Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) Initial Screening

Title of EQIA	Sheltered Housing Communal Area and Facilities
Date	21/09/20
Officer carrying out screening	Emma Cook
Service Area	Tenancy Services
Project Sponsor	Ian Blofield

The characteristics protected by the Equality Act are: **Disability, Age, Sex (gender), Gender reassignment, Marriage/civil partnership, Pregnancy/maternity, Race, Sexual orientation and Religion/belief.**

The purpose of this Equality Impact Assessment is to achieve the following.

By law we must have due regard to the need to:

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Further information on each of the characteristics can be found at the end of the document.

1. Project/Proposal/ Service changes

<p>What is proposed?</p>	<p>Sheltered housing is specifically designed, rented accommodation for older people who would like to remain independent in their own homes, but prefer the added security that sheltered housing has to offer. The minimum age to be eligible for sheltered housing is 60 and the average age of our tenants is 78 yrs.</p> <p>To protect the wellbeing of everyone in our sheltered housing schemes we have issued/carried out the following advice/actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The communal lounges and kitchens have been closed • The guest rooms are closed • The hairdressing rooms are closed • The laundry rooms are open but tenants are restricted to using one at a time • Communal gardens are open for groups of up to 6 tenants using social distancing • Face coverings are required for anyone visiting the scheme and in the communal areas • Face to face contact has been limited
<p>Why are the changes being introduced?</p>	<p>This advice and action taken is in response to government guidance in relation to COVID-19.</p>
<p>What evidence is being used to support this equality impact analysis?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coronavirus (Covid-19): what you need to do - https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus • Guidance for people working in, visiting or delivering to other people's homes - https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/homes • Government guidelines on protecting yourself and others – https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/full-guidance-on-staying-at-home-and-away-from-others/full-guidance-on-staying-at-home-and-away-from-others • Coronavirus (Covid-19): guidance for landlords, tenants and local authorities - https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-and-renting-guidance-for-landlords-tenants-and-local-authorities?utm_source=

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NHS Advice for everyone - https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/• Older people and COVID-19 – WHO - https://www.who.int/teams/social-determinants-of-health/covid-19• Dementia UK - https://www.dementiauk.org/get-support/coronavirus-covid-19/
How will this change be implemented?	N/a - already implemented

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Who is affected?	Impact (positive/negative/no change)	Explanation of impact	Actions to mitigate any adverse impact or further promote positive impact
Age	Negative	<p>Closure of the lounges and kitchens has had a negative impact as there were a number of activities that were held in the lounges that have had to stop and tenants are not able to meet up as they have been previously. This is likely to have a negative impact on Tenants' health and wellbeing, both mental and physical.</p> <p>Face to face contact has been restricted and welfare checks are being carried out remotely. This may exacerbate feelings of loneliness and isolation for those Tenants that have a limited family/friend support network and who continue to shield or self-isolate.</p> <p>Face coverings are required for anyone visiting the schemes or in communal areas. This may lead</p>	<p>We are regularly reviewing the Government guidance to enable us to re open facilities as soon as it is safe to do so.</p> <p>Every scheme has been risk assessed to ensure it is COVID secure.</p> <p>Welfare checks have increased so we are more easily able to identify anyone who is feeling low, isolated or struggling, so support can be put in place.</p> <p>Regular and clear communication has taken place since lockdown. The elderly are more likely to suffer poor health outcomes as a result of COVID-19 and so important that they have access to good information and support about how to stay safe.</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict - due to a lack of understanding around why some people are unable to wear face coverings; and • Communication difficulties – for those that are required to lip read <p>Hairdressing rooms remain closed as we are unable to oversee compliance with health and safety.</p> <p>These changes have been necessary to ensure that Government guidance is followed and to protect our Tenants who are vulnerable either due to their age and/or underlying health conditions.</p>	<p>Use of the communal gardens has been promoted.</p> <p>Support plans have been updated to consider any specific actions required in relation to COVID-19.</p> <p>Scheme Managers are on hand and available every day to assist Tenants.</p> <p>As Sheltered housing tenants live independently, they are still able to make their own arrangements regarding hairdressing.</p> <p>Face to face contact has continued for those tenants that require them (see below)</p> <p>Staff understand the exemptions in place for face coverings</p>
Disability	Negative	The restrictions in place may be more challenging for Tenants with learning disabilities /dementia. People with dementia can see their condition worsen if they are isolated.	Face to face visits and welfare checks have continued for those tenants that require them

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		<p>Complex and changing information in relation to restrictions may be more difficult to understand for those with a learning disability or dementia.</p> <p>Blind and partially sighted people may be unable to see printed COVID- 19 information or signage, posters on walls unless it is an accessible format.</p> <p>People with dementia may have developed a routine and changes to familiar things can lead to people feeling disorientated or anxious.</p> <p><u>Employees are required (unless exempt) to wear face coverings for some visits that have been identified in our risk assessment. This may lead communication difficulties – for those that are required to lip read</u> Face coverings affect the ability of people to lip-read</p>	<p>Visits from families/carers have not been restricted</p> <p>It is not a requirement for staff to wear face coverings when speaking to or visiting Tenants.</p> <p>Scheme Managers have been to see those Tenants that are blind or partially sighted to explain any new information or signage, posters on walls</p> <p>Support plans have been updated to consider any specific actions required in relation to COVID-19.</p> <p>Scheme Managers are on hand and available every day to assist Tenants.</p> <p>Welfare checks have increased so we are more easily able to identify anyone who is feeling low, isolated or struggling, so support can be put in place.</p>

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		People with multi-sensory impairments can be particularly vulnerable to loneliness and may find it harder with less opportunity to meet and communicate	<u>Where it is identified that wearing a face covering will lead to communication difficulties an assessment will be carried out to see what reasonable adjustments can be made.</u>
Gender reassignment	No change	No impact has been identified in addition to the above. <u>There is no evidence to show that these changes would have a negative or positive effect on this protected characteristic group or that they would be treated less favourably or put at a disadvantage as a result of these changes because of their protected characteristic.</u>	
Pregnancy and maternity	N/a	This does not apply due to the age of our Tenants in Sheltered housing.	
Race	Negative	Complex and changing information in relation to restrictions may be more difficult to understand for those where English is not their first language.	We are aware of who those Tenants are and ensuring that they have access to translation services where required or talking to other family members for support/assistance.

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Who is affected?	Impact (positive/negative/no change)	Explanation of impact	Actions to mitigate any adverse impact or further promote positive impact
			Posters displayed are available in other languages and have been distributed where appropriate
Religion or belief	No changes	No impact has been identified in addition to the above. <u>There is no evidence to show that these changes would have a negative or positive effect on this protected characteristic group or that they would be treated less favourably or put at a disadvantage as a result of these changes because of their protected characteristic.</u>	
Sex	No changes	No impact has been identified in addition to the above. <u>There is no evidence to show that these changes would have a negative or positive effect on this protected characteristic group or that they would be treated less favourably or put at a disadvantage as a result of these changes because of their protected characteristic.</u>	
Sexual orientation	No change	No impact has been identified in addition to the above. <u>There is no evidence to show that these changes would have a negative or positive effect on this protected characteristic group or</u>	

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Who is affected?	Impact (positive/negative/no change)	Explanation of impact	Actions to mitigate any adverse impact or further promote positive impact
		<u>that they would be treated less favourably or put at a disadvantage as a result of these changes because of their protected characteristic.</u>	
Marriage and civil partnership	No change	No impact has been identified in addition to the above. <u>There is no evidence to show that these changes would have a negative or positive effect on this protected characteristic group or that they would be treated less favourably or put at a disadvantage as a result of these changes because of their protected characteristic.</u>	

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Q. The report helps us to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment & victimisation' in the following way(s):

A. The harms caused by Coronavirus do not impact everyone equally. This means that the response will impact some groups of people more than others. The report helps by identifying the actions and reasonable adjustments needed to mitigate the adverse impact that has been identified

Q. The report helps us to 'advance equality of opportunity...' in the following way(s):

A. It will help us to minimise any disadvantage identified to meet the needs of different groups. It takes account of disabled people's impairments.

Q. The policy helps us to 'foster good relations...' in the following way(s):

A. It will help to promote understanding of why these decisions have been taken and the impact they will have on the different groups.

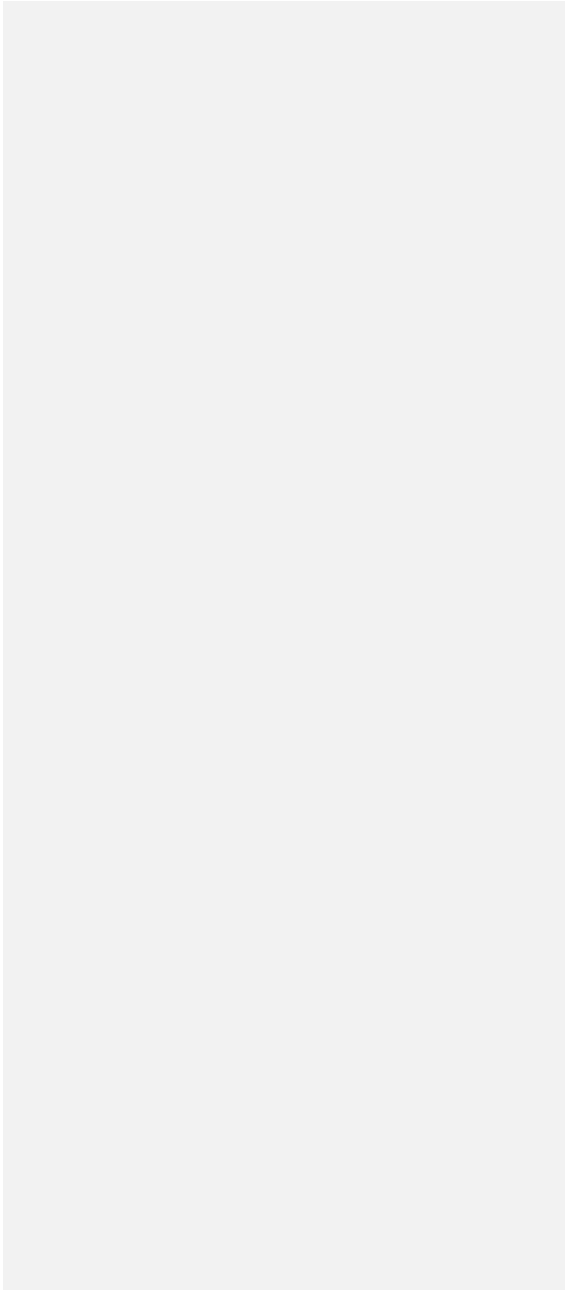
Q. The new provisions will be reviewed in the following way(s):

A. Monthly or as and when guidance and legislation changes

3 Sign Off

Assessment Author:	Emma Cook	15/10/2020
Project Sponsor:		

Please provide any supporting documents in the appendices below.



Appendix 1 – Definition of the nine Protected Characteristics listed under the Equality Act 2010

Age	Where this is referred to, it refers to a person belonging to a particular age (for example 32 year olds) or range of ages (for example 18 - 30 year olds).
Disability	A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
Gender reassignment	This refers to a person who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a change from one gender to another. The Equality Act introduced a number of changes to the legal protection of transgender and transsexual people. The Act no longer requires a person to be under medical supervision to be protected - for example, a woman who decides to live permanently as a man (or visa-versa), but does not undergo any medical procedures is protected by law.
Marriage and civil partnership	Marriage is no longer restricted to a union between a man and a woman but now includes a marriage between same-sex couples. Same-sex couples can also have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must not be treated less favourably than married couples (except where permitted by the Equality Act).
Pregnancy and maternity	Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.
Race	This refers to a group of people defined by their race, skin colour, and/or nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins. The term ethnic minority community is used to define a group of people that is numerically smaller than the predominant white British community. This includes people from communities such as such as Irish, Turkish, Cypriot, Eastern European and Travelling people.
Religion and belief	The term "religion" refers to both the personal practices related to communal faith and to group rituals and communication stemming from shared conviction. Belief can include religious and philosophical beliefs, including lack of belief (e.g. atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in this definition.
Sex (Gender)	This refers to either a male (man) or female (woman).
Sexual orientation	Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.

Further information on the protected characteristics can be found on the [Office of Public Sector Information Website](#)