

West Lothian Council: Equality Impact Assessment

A. About the function, service, policy, procedure, project etc

- 1 What is the name of the function/service/policy/procedure/project etc (called “policy” from this point) to be assessed?

Housing & Building Services Aids & Adaptations Policy

- 2 What were the results of the screening for relevance?

Screening for relevance is conducted by asking the following 4 questions of the topic:

1. *Which aspects of the General Duty does it relate to?*
2. *Is there evidence or reason to believe that some groups could be affected differently? Which groups?*
3. *How much evidence do you have?*
4. *Is there any public concern that functions/policies are operated in a discriminatory manner?*

The policy has a medium/high level of relevance to:

- Race Relations Act 1976 (RRA Amendment Act 2000 & 06)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA Amendment Act 2005 & 06)
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- CRE Code of Practice for Rented Housing
- Recommendations of McPherson Report
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Gender Equality Act 2007

Aims & Scope

The Aids & Adaptations policy is part of the Capital Programme within Housing & Building Services. It is run in partnership with the Community Equipment Store, Social Policy and NHS Healthcare West Lothian.

The aim of the policy and accompanying guidelines is to promote independence for children, adults and older people with a permanent physical, mental or learning difficulty by:

- Giving advice on how to carry out particular tasks differently
- Lending equipment
- Recommending alterations to property
- Getting support or advice from other agencies

Housing & Building services main input is into the alterations to property aspect of the customers needs.

There is a wide variety of information available to the customer on this topic via leaflets, the Tenant Handbook and internet. Customers can be referred by anyone – including the self-assessment route which is carried out via a simple form.

The initial/assessment stages of the process are handled within Social Policy/NHS and require a light to non-existent touch from Housing. Our service becomes heavily involved once the adaptation has been approved for a work order and is allocated to our tradesmen. There is a well-established process for this work and is adhered to by all staff.

West Lothian Council has a budget every year to install Aids & Adaptations (A&A) to homes if the tenant or a member of the tenant's family requires help.

Definitions

Minor adaptations undertaken by West Lothian Council are defined as internal/ external grab rails, external metal handrails, banister rails (includes additional banister rails), internal support rails. These adaptations are usually small-scale adaptations, which are intended to enhance the quality of home living for the customer. These can generally be ordered via the equipment store's catalogue.

West Lothian Council prioritises minor adaptations into either a high or normal priority category

Major adaptations undertaken by West Lothian Council are defined as wet floor showers, shower over bath, wheelchair access ramps and a variety of structural alterations. These adaptations are usually large-scale adaptations, which are intended to enhance the quality of home living and independence for the customer.

West Lothian Council prioritises major adaptations into either a high or normal priority category

Current position

The policy on A & A including medical adaptations is very much process driven and there is a straightforward set of criteria against which tenants are assessed by our colleagues in Social Policy and health. Our involvement in the process is driven by a set of guidelines for staff and timescales of completion for all works which are

consistently met.

The process itself is reviewed regularly and in the recent November 2007 assessment and review inspection a process check was carried out on agreed outcomes of the Tenant Led Inspection in 2002 in regard to A & A. This checking included the front line CIS offices within Customer Services. There was no lack of knowledge found, with only short refresher courses required to top up awareness as this is not an often requested service.

The step by step nature of service delivery for Housing & Building Services on A & A leaves no concern, opportunity or evidence of any type of discrimination against individuals or groups. The policy is inclusive in nature and has been formulated through much consultation and feedback from customers.

Therefore, there is no requirement for a full impact assessment on this area.

3 Briefly describe the aim of the policy etc.

What needs or duties is it designed to meet? Who are the intended beneficiaries? How will it affect employees? How will it affect the community and the different groups of people within it?

Is the service contracted out or delivered under a service-level agreement or with partners? Who else is involved?

In what way will you involve any of these people in the impact assessment process?

B. Gathering the evidence and assessing the impact

- 4 Is there any evidence (or reason to believe) that this policy could have a different effect on some groups of people compared to others? (e.g. different needs, different experiences, different outcomes, different rates of participation, different abilities to access opportunities).

Is there an adverse impact around race, gender, disability, faith, sexual orientation, age, health, etc? What are the reasons for this adverse impact?

- 5 Please describe the evidence or reasoning you have used to make your judgement. What existing data for example (qualitative or quantitative) have you used to form your judgement? Tell us about the information as it applies to different groups (e.g. by race, gender and disability etc).

6 Are there any unmet needs/requirements that can be identified that affect any of the specific groups?

C. Making changes and promoting equality

7 If in your judgement, the policy etc does have an adverse impact, can you modify the policy to reduce/eliminate any adverse impact?

You need to think whether your modifications will:

- have a positive or negative effect on the promotion of equality of opportunity for any group
- help eliminate discrimination in any way
- encourage or hinder community relations.

8 If you cannot modify the policy to reduce adverse impact, consider if the impact can be justified and explain. (It is unlikely that you will be able to justify any impact which amounts to unlawful discrimination.)

If the impact cannot be justified, how do you intend to deal with it?

D. Consultation

8 What steps have you taken/are you taking to consult externally as part of your assessment?

Whom have you consulted? What methods did you use? How long was the consultation period?

Have you consulted any “experts”? Did you involve any people in the affected groups in some other way during the process?

E. Next steps

- 10 What were the results of the consultation?
What have you done with the results i.e. how do you intend to use the information gathered as part of the consultation?

- 11 Have you published the results of that consultation? If so, where?
What arrangements were made to reach specific groups affected?

- 12 What are your recommendations based on the conclusions of this assessment?

- 13 Please provide us with separate information about how you intend to monitor this policy in future. What is the review date set for this policy?

- 14 How will you publish the results of this assessment? What methods will you use?
What arrangements are there to reach specific groups affected?

- 15 Have you conducted any other types of impact assessment on this policy? (e.g. health, financial, environmental).

- 16 Is there anything else you wish to add?

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Assessment made by:	Sarah Kelly
Others involved in assessment:	
Summary of assessment (this will be published). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What you did ▪ What evidence you used ▪ What you found ▪ What consultation you undertook ▪ What changes you made ▪ What will happen next. 	Conduct Screening for Relevance/Equality Impact Assessment Assessment & Review report November 2007 Communities Scotland Inspection Report No evidence or perceptions of discrimination. N/a N/a This summary will be presented to Housing & Building Services Management Team with the recommendation that the Capital Programme Policy is assessed separately.
Manager's Signature	
Date:	
Service area and job title:	

When you have completed this form, please take a copy and send it to your service representative on the Corporate Working Group on Equality and/or the Equality Officer.