

Item No.

Title of Report: Equality Impact Assessment - Grow Your Own	
Decision Making Body: Hackney Homes Executive Team	Date: 2 August 2011
Classification: FOR Information	Report of:
Item Previously considered at:	On Which Date:
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Report Outline:

INTRODUCTION

1. What is an Equality Impact Assessment?

An Equality Impact Assessment is a systematic way of assessing the likely equality effect of implementing a new policy or initiative or of the operation of a current policy function or service. The Equality Act 2010 introduced nine protected characteristics or groups: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/ civil partnership, pregnancy / maternity, race, religion/ belief, sex/gender and sexual orientation. An Equality Impact Assessment helps public bodies to identify the equality consequences of any policies and functions for people who have a protected characteristic and implement positive action to ensure that any identified negative impact is eliminated.

The Equality Act 2010 also introduced a public sector equality duty (PSED). The PSED is effective from the 5 April 2011 and has replaced the three previous duties on race, disability and gender, bringing them together into a single duty. Carrying out an Equality Impact Assessment will help public bodies to meet the general duties of the PSED to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations in the course of developing policies and delivering services. The aims of the duty are for public bodies to consider the needs of all individuals in their day to day work, in developing policy, in delivering services, and in relation to their own employees. The PSED applies to all protected groups apart from marriage and civil partnership where it only applies to the aim to eliminate unlawful discrimination.

Review of Equality Impact Assessments

Both initial and full EIAs require the relevant Director and the Service Development Team (quality check) to sign off the reports and action plans. Completed EIA's and action plans will be reported to the Executive Team, the Equality & Diversity Group (for information purposes) and summary to the Board. Progress of the Hackney Homes EIA Programme will be monitored on a quarterly basis by the Hackney Homes Equality & Diversity Group.

2. Overall Aims and Objectives

The policy aims to provide a structured procedure based approach and guide for residents of Hackney Homes estates whom wish to use a patch of communal land within the estate or adjacent to a Council owned block for any one of the following types of use:

- Communal garden maintained by residents
- Allotments scheme where strips of land are used by residents to grow vegetables
- Orchards
- Garden furniture

Objective: To create 10 communal garden growing projects per year on Hackney Homes managed land.

Residents receive funding from outside organisations. Resident Participation Officers assist residents with applying for funding

3. Main Beneficiaries

All residents and all leaseholders

4. Desired Outcomes

To promote community cohesion by reducing anti social behaviour, removing potential eye sores, creating opportunities for residents to meet other residents, young and old to mix and for tenants to take an interest in their local environment. To encourage healthy eating and sustainable neighbourhoods.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

1. Summary of Positive Impacts for protected groups

Provide a locale readily accessible area to grow food produce. Facilitate healthy eating. Encourage community cohesion, reduce ASB. Actively seek to involve hard to reach residents.

All residents, regardless of their age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, race, religion/belief or sexual orientation should be able to access the scheme equally.

The scheme will provide raised beds to accommodate the needs of elderly residents who may not be able to bend easily and lower beds for small children to tend to.

The scheme will take into account the needs of people who have disabilities by ensuring growing areas will be located in areas that are accessible to everyone including wheelchair users. Also growing areas should be both high and low so as to accommodate individuals with various ailments.

2. Summary of Negative Impacts for protected groups

Females from cultures may not feel they can get involved in schemes involving men from outside their immediate family.

This issue can be mitigated by providing allocated days and times for females to take part in the scheme.

3. Summary of internal/external research or consultation(s) carried out:

Estate Environment have conducted consultations with resident groups to establish if a growing scheme based on estates would be generally welcomed. The response was positive.

4. Recommendations.

The scheme will be monitored and periodically evaluated. Assessment of the scheme will be conducted through surveys and resident consultation groups, which will be carried out every 6 months. The data will facilitate an understanding of any areas which need to be readdressed in order to better understand the needs of our customers and provide a service that better response to them.



If you have any questions about this report, please contact Cherie Joseph on 0208 356 1934 or email: cherie.joseph@hackneyhomes.org.uk

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