

Item No.
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<b>Title of Report: Equality Impact Assessment - Minor Adaptations on Demand / Trusted Assessors</b>	
<b>Decision Making Body: Hackney Homes Executive Team</b>	<b>Date:</b> July 2011
<b>Classification: FOR Information</b>	<b>Report of:</b>
<b>Item Previously considered at:</b>	<b>On Which Date:</b>
<b>Report Author: - Martin Spinks Tel: 0208 356 6293</b>	<b>Appendices: Minor Adaptations/ Trusted Assessors Initial Equality Impact Report and action plan</b>

**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 overall aim of this service is to allow Hackney Homes and Hackney Council, Community Services to provide a cohesive Equipment and Adaptations Service and deliver a high standard of adaptation to users in a timely manner. To improve the provision of minor adaptations a pilot scheme offering a small range of routine non specialist items has been agreed with officers and residents. These items will be provided "on Demand" service for eligible service users, subject to an informal verification that there are no serious, deteriorating medical conditions. Where a service user requests 4 or more minor adaptations on demand, or requests advice and assistance, a trained "Trusted Assessor" from Hackney Homes will visit and undertake an assessment.

The desired outcomes are to:

- Reduce delays to those waiting for low impact minor adaptations.
- Improve service delivery (speed at which adaptation received from first contact to installation of adaptation)
- Release Occupational Therapist time to concentrate on more serious cases.
- Enable Hackney homes to deliver minor adaptations in around 3 weeks rather than 9 weeks as currently typical
- Improved value for money, although demand will need to be monitored to ensure a reasonable spend within budget limitations
- Have in place a responsive minor adaptations service, backed with Trusted Assessors which furthers the aims of "self assessment" by clients.

With safeguards in place to ensure any service user that needs a formal Occupational Therapist Assessment is identified and expedited quickly, with minimal additional delays.

### **3. Main Beneficiaries**

Hackney Homes tenants and families / carers living within the London Borough of Hackney whom experience minor disabilities, and reducing any difficulty living within their home

### **4. Desired Outcomes**

The aim of this project is to ensure that all residents regardless of their age, disability, race, faith/belief, gender (including pregnancy and maternity), gender reassignment or sexual orientation will be able to receive agreed minor adaptations on demand and within an agreed time frame by appointment. Service users will have equal access to this service.

As this system will remove the need for extensive service user profiling at initial assessment, staff time savings are expected to be significant

## **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 1. Summary of Positive Impacts for protected groups** e.g. age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion/belief and sexual orientation. (Refer to evidence e.g. consultation, complaints, monitoring etc).

### **Age**

They may be concerns over the vulnerability of some of our older residents who may be victims of bogus callers. The service has recently introduced a password system for added security for vulnerable people against bogus callers

### **Disability**

There could be concerns about accessibility of information provided to our disabled residents which may suggest an underreporting in adaptation. Hackney Homes is able to make reasonable adjustments to ensure information is accessible, for example, providing British Sign Language Interpreters, having leaflets produced in Braille, Large Print, Easy Read or on coloured paper by request. Operatives have also undergone general equalities and customer service training that covers basic disability awareness.

An 'Equipment and Adaptation' stall was present on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2010 as part of the 'Residents' Open Day'. The aim of this stall was to raise awareness of the service and the rights and benefits to our residents. This resulted in an increase in applications for adaptations. Information about the service is available on the Hackney Homes website for those people who because of mobility issues prefer to use the intranet. See: <http://www.hackneyhomes.org.uk/hhs-home-adaptation.htm>. We are currently producing a leaflet in easy read format for people with learning difficulties. This leaflet has been produced in consultation with the Residents Disability Forum and for accessibility by a group of adult people with learning difficulties.

### **Gender ( including Pregnancy and Maternity)**

They may be safety concerns for our residents, especially for female residents, where they would prefer the adaptations to be made by someone of the same gender. Female operatives are available if required

### **Gender Reassignment**

Residents who have undergone gender reassignment may feel uncomfortable whilst building works are in process, because of fears about confidentiality or harassment. Both in house staff and contractors are required to meet standards required for undertaking work within the service users home These standards include, for example, maintaining confidentiality, respect, code of conduct, clear lines of communication and equality through the process.

### **Race**

There may be a differential impact on residents who do not have English as a first or second language, and may have difficulty understanding the information provided about the service, as this is predominately in English. Hackney Homes is able to translate documents upon request into different languages,

In addition, language interpreters are also available free of charge and a telephone interpretation service is available through Language Line

Operatives carry a community language card to identify any language.

Gypsy and Travellers families may find it difficult to accept and receive adaptation due to a closed family network and belief that they should take care of their own family members. Hackney Homes has a Gypsy and Traveller Service Development Officer to help liaise with the groups.

### **Religion or Belief**

Operatives have undergone Equality training which includes information on cultural awareness, and will endeavour to accommodate our residents' cultural beliefs. Some religious groups may not prefer to be visited by people external to their group, Some cultural beliefs do not allow female family members to interact members of the opposite sex. This service is predominately a male service but, female operative are available to meet this need if requested.

Operatives have undergone Equality training which includes information on religious awareness, and will endeavour to accommodate our residents' religious beliefs. Within the Jewish Culture their faith dictates that no work is carried out in their home on Fridays, this may cause delays in making the adaptations. Hackney Homes will ensure that suitable arrangements are made meet the needs and requirements of this group and tenants of other faiths by using the online religious calender to ensure appointments do not clash religious days/festivals.

### **Sexual Orientation**

They may be concerns for our lesbian, bisexual and gay residents in receiving adaptations, due to fear of being 'outed' or any negative stereotyping. This may result in a lack of confidence in agencies to provide a sensitive approach to delive Both in house staff and contractors are required to meet standards required for undertaking work within the service users homes. These standards include, for example, maintaining confidentiality, respect, code of conduct,clear lines of communication and equality through the process.

### **Others**

#### **Carers**

Whilst fitting works are in progress it may cause disruption to the day to day care provided to the service user from the carer. Flexi appointments that fit into the lifestyle of the service user and/or carer will minimise this. Adjustments to the carers routine may occur due to the installation of the adaptation, for example within the Muslim culture commitments to daily prayers takes place 5 times daily, building works can hamper these arrangements. Where possible, operatives aim to minimise the disruptions caused by adaptation, by liaising with residents and their carers on how best to carry out the work.

Carers who residents will also benefit from our flexiable appointment service which includes Saturday morning and week day appointments up to 6pm.

This policy supports human rights considerations by providing a faster and more accessible service for residents who require aids and adaptations by removing barriers to them enjoying their home.

- 2. Summary of Negative Impacts for protected groups e.g. age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion/belief and sexual orientation (If possible explain how it can be justified and/or eliminated).**

#### **Age**

The majority of service users are aged 55years and over so we will publicise the scheme at residents group for the under 40s and youth committees to increase awareness amongst younger age groups

#### **Disability**

We will publicise the new easy read leaflet and add to the Hackney Homes website to ensure information is accessible to those with learning or literacy difficulties.

Update the webpage to include inform about the scheme and publicise to the Disability forum and Deaf Plus service for deaf residents.

Find a solution to issue about lever taps to bathroom for disabled/older people- solution found (converter tap found so lever taps can be fitted in bathroom under the

scheme)

**Gender including pregnancy and maternity**

N/A

**Gender Reassignment**

N/A

**Race, Religion/Belief**

The majority of service users are whites so we will publicise the scheme amongst the following resident groups ie African and Caribbean Consultative Forum, Asian women's group and the Turkish Focus Group

**Sexual Orientation**

Publicise the scheme with Age UK Camden which is an LGBT group for older people.

**Other Groups**

Raise with LBH include data for all protected groups for take- up of aids and adaptations. For example disability not collected by LBH or check if universal housing can be used for recording data.

**General**

For all equality groups produce a survey with the LBH to measure usage of the new scheme by equality groups. Update satisfaction survey form equality monitoring page to incorporate changes made to the revised customer profiling form.

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

Data from LBH April 2010 to Jan 2011

Service users take up of minor adaptations by equality groups

**Age:**

0-54 years 47 users (35%)

55 years plus 81 users (65%)

**Gender:**

Female 81 users- 59%

Male 55 users 41%

**Race:**

White UK, Irish and other 74 users -59%

Asian and Asian British 11 users- 10%

Black and Black British 38 users- 31%

**Religion:**

Christians 67 users (67%)

Muslims 18 users (18%)

Atheists 7 users (7%)

Jewish Other 5 users (5%)

Jewish Orthodox 1 user (1%)

Sikh 1 user (1%)

Other 1 user (1%)

**4. Recommendations.** Include, plans for monitoring any action plan, if further consultation is required or whether a full impact assessment is planned with timescales.

- A more detailed EIA is not required for the scheme as most potential

- adverse impacts can be mitigated pre-launch
- Actions will be regularly monitored by Property Services via the EIA action plan
  - Satisfaction/take-up levels of the scheme will be reviewed six months after the scheme it is launched.

If you have any questions about this report, please contact Martin Spinks on 0208 356 6293 or email:

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