

Appendix 5

PART B – Equality Analysis Form

As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality and diversity.

This form:

- Can be used to prompt discussions, ensure that due regard has been given and remove or minimise disadvantage for an individual or group with a protected characteristic
- Involves looking at what steps can be taken to advance and maximise equality as well as eliminate discrimination and negative consequences
- Should be completed before decisions are made, this will remove the need for remedial actions.

Note – An Initial Equality Screening Assessment (Part A) should be completed prior to this form.

When completing this form consider the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics Age, Disability, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, Civil Partnerships and Marriage, Pregnancy and Maternity and other socio-economic groups e.g. parents, single parents and guardians, carers, looked after children, unemployed and people on low incomes, ex-offenders, victims of domestic violence, homeless people etc. – see page 11 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance.

1. Title	
Equality Analysis title: Housing Services Repairs and Maintenance Policy, Electrical Safety, and Gas and CO Safety Policies	
Date of Equality Analysis (EA): 01/10/24	
Directorate: Adult Care, Housing and Public Health	Service area: Housing Property Services, Housing Services
Lead Manager: Wendy G Foster	Contact number: (01709) 255047
Is this a: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strategy / Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Service / Function <input type="checkbox"/> Other	
If other, please specify	

2. Names of those involved in the Equality Analysis (Should include minimum of three people) - see page 7 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance

Name	Organisation	Role (eg service user, managers, service specialist)
Wendy G Foster	RMBC	Improvement Manager
John Oliver	Agency/RMBC	Compliance Manager
Lynsey Stephenson	RMBC	Head of Service

3. What is already known? - see page 10 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance

Aim/Scope (who the Policy/Service affects and intended outcomes if known)

This may include a group/s identified by a protected characteristic, others groups or stakeholder/s e.g. service users, employees, partners, members, suppliers etc.)

These policies apply to all tenants living in the Council's HRA/residential properties, many of whom will have protected characteristics.

What equality information is available? (Include any engagement undertaken)

The Housing Service holds equalities information on Council housing tenants and on its employees. This information is considered when a report is submitted.

Tenants Scrutiny Panel were consulted on the draft Repairs and Maintenance Policy on 15 July 2024, SMT on 17 July 2024, and DLT on 23 July and 24 September. The policies will be presented to SLT on 7 October 2024, IPSC on 22 October 2024, and Cabinet on 18 November 2024.

Are there any gaps in the information that you are aware of?

The Council has only recently started to collate information regarding equality information on pregnancy.

What monitoring arrangements have you made to monitor the impact of the policy or service on communities/groups according to their protected characteristics?

- Customer feedback is received and monitored daily.
- KPI information and TSM data is collated monthly/quarterly through Performance, Intelligence and Improvement, and shared across Housing Services' Heads of Service and Assistant Director, at the monthly HQIP meetings.
- Complaints information relating to repairs and maintenance is also shared at HQIP.

Engagement undertaken with customers. (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)

Tenants Scrutiny Panel were consulted on the draft Repairs and Maintenance Policy on 15 July 2024.

Tenants were keen to remove/replace the term 'vulnerabilities/vulnerable tenants', as some individuals

	<p>may need repairs prioritising but would not consider themselves vulnerable. The Council's approach is that, in many cases, the repair/environment can impact tenants' vulnerability.</p> <p>This has been replaced with 'personal circumstances'.</p>
<p>Engagement undertaken with staff (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)</p>	<p>SMT on 17 July 2024, and DLT on 23 July and 24 September.</p> <p>The policies will be presented to SLT on 7 October 2024, IPSC on 22 October 2024, and Cabinet on 18 November 2024.</p> <p>Amendments have been made to include a section on Leaseholders, append a list of emergency repairs, include new build properties/market acquisitions (12 month defects period), and replace the word 'vulnerable/vulnerabilities', with personal circumstances.</p>

4. The Analysis - of the actual or likely effect of the Policy or Service (Identify by protected characteristics)

How does the Policy/Service meet the needs of different communities and groups? (Protected characteristics of Age, Disability, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, Civil Partnerships and Marriage, Pregnancy and Maternity) - see glossary on page 14 of the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance)

As well as the list of emergency repairs at Appendix 1 of the policy, there is scope to upgrade non-emergency repairs to emergency status. This results in repairs being carried out within 4 hours, rather than during a mutually convenient appointment, within 28 days of the repair being reported. For example, should a tenant have a shower over a bath in their home, and report a repair with their shower, it would ordinarily be repaired within 28 days as the bath provides a bathing facility. However, the Council understands that there are some medical conditions for which bathing is detrimental, in these instances the shower repair will be classed as an emergency and attended within 4 hours.

Does your Policy/Service present any problems or barriers to communities or Groups?

The policies largely reflect the status quo so it is likely that agreeing the policies will have a neutral or slightly positive impact on Rotherham's residents.

The Council is focussing on the accessibility of its repairs and maintenance policy and making it easier for tenants to report repairs and book an appointment which is convenient for them. This can be done either through calling the customer contact centre or online through Housing Online (HOL).

It is understood that HOL cannot currently be viewed in other languages. The cost to make this happen is considerable but is being considered as accessibility is key to delivering against the Transparency, Influence and Accountability consumer standard, as published by the Regulator of Social Housing and enforced through the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023.

Does the Service/Policy provide any positive impact/s including improvements or remove barriers?

With agreement of the policies by Cabinet, HPS will increase the amount of decoration allowance awarded to tenants following works which damage the décor in their homes.

It is understood that the increase in decoration allowance will support all tenants who need to redecorate following works to their homes.

Within the policy, tenants are invited to share their personal circumstances when reporting repairs. The consideration of tenants' personal circumstances, and how those circumstances will be taken into account when determining the urgency of repairs, will have a positive impact and improve the lives of tenants as the Housing Service starts to tailor its services to meet tenants' needs.

What affect will the Policy/Service have on community relations? (may also need to consider activity which may be perceived as benefiting one group at the expense of another)

Tenants' personal circumstances may sometimes lead to a non-urgent repair being reclassified as urgent. If this occurs frequently, non-standard jobs appointed jobs, which on average are usually completed with 15 days, may take a little longer to complete but would still be carried out within the stated 28 days.

Please list any **actions and targets** that need to be taken as a consequence of this assessment on the action plan below and ensure that they are added into your service plan for monitoring purposes – see page 12 of the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance.

5. Summary of findings and Equality Analysis Action Plan

If the analysis is done at the right time, i.e. early before decisions are made, changes should be built in before the policy or change is signed off. This will remove the need for remedial actions. Where this is achieved, the only action required will be to monitor the impact of the policy/service/change on communities or groups according to their protected characteristic - See page 11 of the Equality Screening and Analysis guidance

Scope of analysis:	Housing Services Repairs and Maintenance Policy, Electrical Safety, and Gas and CO Safety Policies
Directorate and service area:	Adult Care, Housing and Public Health, Housing Services, Housing Property Services
Lead Manager:	Lynsey Stephenson, Head of Service
Summary of findings:	
<p>There is a need to ensure a robust performance management framework to ensure the service is being prioritised to individuals whose personal circumstances may lead to a non-urgent repair being reclassified as urgent.</p> <p>The Council needs to continue to collate and quality check the information held regarding its tenants equalities information.</p>	

Action/Target	State Protected Characteristics as listed below	Target date (MM/YY)
Building on the equalities information the Council holds regarding its tenants and their household members	Age, disability pregnancy/maternity, ethnicity	Ongoing

Continue to monitor performance and complaints	Age, disability, pregnancy/maternity, ethnicity	Ongoing
With the exception of damp and mould reports, tenant feedback is collated through the Council's repair partners, EQUANS and Mears. The Council will monitor responses received for damp and mould to ensure the respondents reflects the borough's demographic and amend the process if needed. It is envisaged that, in the longer term, the Council will directly collate feedback for all repairs and maintenance.	Age, disability, pregnancy/maternity, ethnicity	January 2025
The Council will roll out its direct collation of tenant feedback to tenants who receive capital works. If successful, direct collation of tenants' feedback to repairs and maintenance, will be fully carried out in-house.	Age, disability, pregnancy/maternity, ethnicity	January 2025 July 2025

***A = Age, D= Disability, S = Sex, GR Gender Reassignment, RE= Race/ Ethnicity, RoB= Religion or Belief, SO= Sexual Orientation, PM= Pregnancy/Maternity, CPM = Civil Partnership or Marriage. C= Carers, O= other groups**

6. Governance, ownership and approval		
Please state those that have approved the Equality Analysis. Approval should be obtained by the Director and approval sought from DLT and the relevant Cabinet Member.		
Name	Job title	Date
SLT	Chief Exec and Directors	7 October 2024
James Clark	Assistant Director, Housing Services	1 October 2024

7. Publishing

The Equality Analysis will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given.

If this Equality Analysis relates to a **Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision** a copy of the completed document should be attached as an appendix and published alongside the relevant report.

A copy should also be sent to equality@rotherham.gov.uk For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.

Date Equality Analysis completed	1 October 2024
Report title and date	Housing Services Repairs and Maintenance Policy, Electrical Safety, and Gas and CO Safety Policies, Cabinet 18 November 2024
Date report sent for publication	1 December 2024
Date Equality Analysis sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	1 October 2024