

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

The separate EIA guidance notes outline what should be included for each section. Please read them before you begin. If you have any queries, contact your Corporate Equality Group rep, or the Engagement Team on 643 2828.

1. Author, service area, date

Martin Bewick, Housing Strategy, 29th July 2015

2. Who else has been involved in writing this EIA?

Paul Worth (Housing Operations Manager), Becky Dodds (Housing Strategy and Development Officer), Imran Ahmed (Housing Strategy and Development Officer)

3. What proposal is this EIA assessing?

Affordable Rent Policy 2015

4. What is the purpose of your proposal and what is it expected to achieve?

The Affordable Rent Policy sets out North Tyneside Council's proposed approach to implementing and managing Affordable Rent Tenancies. This policy will apply to all new build properties, developed in partnership with the Homes and Communities Agency and which benefit from the 105-1018 Affordable Homes Programme Funding. This is in line with the HCAs requirement for the use of Affordable Rent when grant is allocated.

By adopting an Affordable Rent Policy the Council will be able to explore the possibility of securing grant funding with the Homes and Communities Agency via their Affordable Homes Programme 2015-18. The level of this grant funding varies depending in the cost of the development and financial model, however grant rates are approximately £20,000 per property.

It will also allow the Council to secure their first allocation of £720,000 derived from partnership working with Galliford Try i.e. 32 affordable homes developed at Blandford Road as agreed at Cabinet 7 April 2014.

5. Is there any relevance to the aims of the public sector equality duty? *Write your answers in the table*

Aim	Yes, No, or N/A	Details if 'yes'
Eliminate unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment		
Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not	Yes	An Affordable Rent Policy will enable the Council to deliver a new model of housing in areas which may otherwise have been unaffordable for some people. Those with protected characteristics may have been more likely to have been disadvantaged within the housing market; therefore Affordable Rent will advance equality of opportunity.
Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not		

6. Analysis by characteristic *Write your answers in the table*

Protected characteristic	Potential positive or negative impact?	Explanation and evidence
Age	<p>Positive</p> <p>Negative</p>	<p>By developing affordable housing (enabled through this policy), therefore providing additional housing stock, there will be increased opportunity of access to housing for all.</p> <p>Young people who are often be on a lower wage, will be disadvantaged from meeting the Affordable Rent Level (higher than Social Rent) and, while the Affordable Rent Policy sets a ceiling at the Local Housing Allowance (if lower than 80% of Market Rent), young people (single under 35s) will not be able to claim this rate of housing benefit (entitled only to shared room rate). From 2016, those aged under 21 will be excluded from entitlement to housing benefit.</p>

Disability	Positive	By developing affordable housing (enabled through this policy), therefore providing additional housing stock, there will be increased opportunity of access to housing for all. By setting a 'ceiling' on Affordable Rents which is below or at the Local Housing Allowance, Housing Benefit will meet Affordable Rent Levels protecting the most vulnerable.
Gender	Negative Neutral Positive	Women often earn less than men and therefore at a disadvantage for meeting the Affordable Rent Level (higher than Social Rent). However, by setting a 'ceiling' on Affordable Rents which is below or at the Local Housing Allowance, Housing Benefit will meet Affordable Rent Levels protecting the most vulnerable. By developing affordable housing (enabled through this policy) and therefore providing additional housing stock, there will be increased opportunity of access to housing for all. This will provide greater opportunity for men who have historically been at a disadvantage in accessing social housing.
Gender reassignment	Neutral	
Marriage and civil partnership status	Negative	While the Affordable Rent Policy sets a ceiling at the Local Housing Allowance (if lower than 80% of Market Rent) single under 35s will not be eligible for this rate of housing benefit.
Pregnancy and maternity	Positive	By developing affordable housing (enabled through this policy) and therefore providing additional housing stock, there will be increased opportunity of access to housing for all. However, by setting a 'ceiling' on Affordable Rents which is below or at the Local Housing Allowance, Housing Benefit will meet Affordable Rent Levels protecting the most vulnerable.
Race	Positive	By developing affordable housing (enabled through this policy) and therefore providing additional housing stock, there will be increased opportunity of access to housing for all.
Religion or belief	Positive	By developing affordable housing (enabled through this policy) and therefore providing additional housing stock, there will be increased opportunity of access to housing for all.
Sexual orientation	Positive	By developing affordable housing (enabled through this policy) and therefore providing additional housing stock, there will be increased opportunity of access to housing for all.

7. Have you carried out any engagement in relation to this proposal? If so, what?
No

8. Is there any information you don't have that you need to find?
No

9. What actions are already in place, or will be taken, to remove or reduce potential negative impacts? (add more lines to the table if you need to)

Action	Responsibility	Timescale
Affordable Rent will be considered as part of the Allocations and Lettings Policy Review	Katrina Anderson	2016

10. Are there any potential negative impacts that cannot be removed or reduced? If so, why is this?

Negative impacts identified above have been mitigated within the policy through the provision of a 'ceiling' for Affordable Rent set at the Local Housing Allowance.

Other negative impacts are associated with this policy derive from Housing Benefit Regulations and inequalities in earnings between those with protected characteristics. These are outside of the scope of this policy and EIA.

11. Based on your conclusions from this assessment, what are your next steps?

Implement policy.

12. How will the impact of this proposal be monitored after it is introduced?

Due to the small number of planned Affordable Rent Units, monitoring lettings data will not provide robust evidence of the equality impact of the policy. Future reviews of the EIA will utilise customer feedback.

13. When will this EIA be reviewed?

2018 or date of next policy review if sooner.