

Equality Impact Assessment Form

This Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out to improve the work of the Council by making sure that our services, functions, policies, procedures & practices do not discriminate and that where possible they promote equality.

Section One – Screening

Name of strategy, project or policy:

Erewash Private Sector Empty Property Strategy 2007 – 2010

Lead officer completing assessment:

Name	Position	Areas of experience	Comments
Tessa Paul	Housing Strategy Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Housing Strategy• Housing Needs• Vulnerable People Housing Assessment	Lead officer for the production of the Private Sector Empty Property Strategy Other EBC colleagues leading on areas of implementation

Other members of the assessment team

Name	Position	Areas of expertise	Comments
Sylvia Wilson	Team Leader (Housing Renewal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Private Sector Housing Enforcement• Administering financial assistance	
Ian McHugh	Development Manager	Responsibility for Development Control, Building Control and Housing Strategy staff.	

Department responsible:

Development and Regulatory Services

Service Area:

N/A

Telephone:

0115 907 2269 Internal: ext 3083

1. What is the main purpose of the strategy/project/policy?

The Erewash Private Sector Empty Property Strategy 2007 – 2010 has been developed with the aim of ensuring that every effort is made to return empty homes back into use, and that neighbourhoods are not unnecessarily adversely affected by empty properties

2. Desired Outcomes – Outline what the policy, procedure or working practice will achieve

- Empty Properties brought back into use to assist with meeting housing needs– (minimum = to meet BVPI or other targets)
- Prevent empty homes falling into disrepair and becoming an eye sore and a potential environmental hazard.

3. Who is intended to benefit from the policy, procedure or working practice and how will they benefit?

- Empty Property Owners –will understand the Council's commitment, powers and assistance to bring empty properties back into use for housing. Will understand their own responsibilities for repairs, maintenance and bringing back into use.
- Registered Social Landlords and Charitable Accommodation providers – will understand the need to identify empty properties in the areas they work. Will see opportunities for working in partnership to bring empty properties into use as affordable housing
- Local Residents with empty properties in their neighbourhood – will understand the need to identify empty properties and bring to the attention of the council. Will benefit from Council intervention in improving properties which are having a negative impact within their community
- Other departments within the Council – will understand their role in identifying and ensuring empty properties brought back into use and/or not having a negative impact on the community

4. List the main activities of the project/policy (for strategies list the main policy areas):

The objective is to bring empty properties back into use as housing by:

- Commitment of staff time and resources
- Raise awareness of empty homes issues and giving advice
- Compile an empty homes database
- Bringing empty properties back into use – direct action

These are supported by a comprehensive action plan to:

- Investigate joint working with neighbouring authorities
- Promote the Strategy with key stakeholders and public
- Develop a database of long term empty properties
- Appoint RSL partner to deliver empty properties affordable housing project and completion of project.
- Deliver Empty Property Grants
- Proactively encourage change of use to residential dwellings, where appropriate
- Attempt made to contact all owners – targeting properties over 6 months empty
- Annual Report produced to Members and other stakeholders regarding progress and success
- Develop 2010-2015 Empty Homes Strategy

5. Who are the main stakeholders? (e.g. partnerships, other departments etc)

Erewash Borough Council; Empty Property Owners; Registered Social Landlords and charitable accommodation providers; local residents, other departments

6. Impact

The policy, procedure or working practice may have a differential impact on people's race, religion/belief, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation or caring responsibilities; which could be positive (it could benefit) or negative (it could disadvantage). The policy, procedure or working practice may also have a neutral impact (no consequences).

Please complete the table below to identify the impact, give details of the impact, and identify the people impacted and to detail if there is a justification. Please also detail any evidence. If there are gaps in your evidence or unjustifiable negative or positive impact(s) then you will need to proceed to Section 2 (full assessment) Consultation to gather more information.

	Positive Impact (<input type="checkbox"/>)	Negative Impact (<input type="checkbox"/>)	Neutral Impact (<input type="checkbox"/>)	Reason for Impact	Details of People Impacted (e.g. BME community, wheelchair users, females etc)	Evidence (this may include statistics or data already collected)	Can any positive/negative impact be justified? Is it lawful? (e.g. positive action)
Race		✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk of lack of understanding of the reasons why BME empty property owners may wish to leave a property empty. Risk of inequitable treatment and powers used 	BME community	<p>Failure to research or consult on whether there are cultural issues why properties may need to be left empty</p> <p>Failure to collect and/or adequately assess & report monitoring evidence by ethnicity of those in receipt of empty property services, grants, or other actions.</p> <p>Failure to collect and assess equalities information on consultees on the strategy.</p>	No

	Positive Impact (☐)	Negative Impact (☐)	Neutral Impact (☐)	Reason for Impact	Details of People Impacted (e.g. BME community, wheelchair users, females etc)	Evidence (this may include statistics or data already collected)	Can any positive/negative impact be justified? Is it lawful? (e.g. positive action)
Religion/Belief		✓		<p>Risk of lack of understanding of the reasons why empty property owners of certain religions or beliefs may wish to leave a property empty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk of people from Muslim communities not being able to access loans to bring empty property back into use - for religious reasons i.e. not Sharia friendly which means that it is not acceptable to pay interest under Islamic law • Risk that within certain communities taking out a loan with interest may not be appropriate whereas a simple change to terminology e.g. from 'interest' to 'admin fee' would be more acceptable/a selling point • Risk of failure to consult with different religious communities • Risk of inequitable treatment and powers used 	<p>People with religious or belief systems which impact on the sale or use of properties, accessing loans.</p>	<p>Failure to research or consult on whether there are cultural issues why properties may need to be left empty, or loans accessed.</p> <p>Failure to collect and/or adequately assess & report monitoring evidence by religion/faith of those in receipt of empty property services, grants, or other actions.</p> <p>Failure to collect and assess equalities information on consultees on the strategy.</p>	No
Disability	✓			<p>The strategy document is accessible to those with a sensory disability.</p>	<p>Disabled members of the community with specific requirements</p>	<p>on the council's website. This has a speech-enabled facility., and Large-print facility</p>	No
Gender		✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk of inequitable treatment and powers used 	<p>Male/Female</p>	<p>Failure to collect and/or adequately assess &</p>	

	Positive Impact (☐)	Negative Impact (☐)	Neutral Impact (☐)	Reason for Impact	Details of People Impacted (e.g. BME community, wheelchair users, females etc)	Evidence (this may include statistics or data already collected)	Can any positive/negative impact be justified? Is it lawful? (e.g. positive action)
						report monitoring evidence by gender of those in receipt of empty property services, grants, or other actions.	No
Age		✓		Risk that older people may not want to sell or lease empty properties which have "been in the family for years"	Older people	Anecdotal only	No
Sexual Orientation		✓		Risk of inequitable treatment and powers used	LGBT empty property owners, neighbours	Failure to collect monitoring evidence by sexual orientation of empty property owners, neighbours, and consultees on the strategy.	No
Caring Responsibilities	✓			Risk that properties may be left empty as owners are living with others as their carers. But with intention to return if/when no longer have caring responsibilities.	Empty property owners who are living with others as their carers	Anecdotal only	No

Notes:

Faith groups cover a wide range of groupings, the most common of which are Muslims, Buddhists, Jews, Christians, Sikhs, and Hindus. Consider faith categories individually and collectively when considering positive and negative impacts.

The categories used in the Race section are those used in the 2001 census. Consideration should be given to the needs of specific communities within the broad categories such as Bangladeshi people and to the needs of other communities such as Turkish/Turkish Cypriot, Greek/Greek Cypriot, Italian and Polish that do not appear as separate categories in the census.

7. If you have indicated there is a negative impact on any group, is that impact:

Legal? YES NO **Unsure**

Cannot be sure whether discrimination on grounds of race, gender, religion etc – as not adequately monitoring

(I.e. it is not discriminatory under anti-discriminatory legislation)

Intended? YES NO

Level of impact HIGH LOW **If monitoring showed discrimination – would be high**

If the negative impact is possibly discriminatory and not intended and/or of high impact **you must complete section two** of this form. If not, complete the rest of section one below and consider if completing section two would be helpful in making a thorough assessment.

a) Could you minimise or remove any negative impact that is of low significance?

Explain how:

N/A

b) Could you improve the strategy, project or policy's positive impact?

Explain how:

N/A

You may wish to use the action sheet at the end of Section Two.

8. If there is no evidence that the strategy, policy or project promotes equality, equal opportunities or improved relations – could it be adapted so that it does?

How?

N/A

Please sign and date this form, keep one copy and send one copy to Executive office

Signed **Tessa Paul**

Date **November 2007**

Section Two – Full assessment

Name of strategy, project or policy:

Erewash Private Sector Empty Property Strategy 2007 – 2010

Date: Nov 07

Part a

1. Looking back at section one of the EQIA, in what areas are there concerns that the strategy, policy or project could have a negative impact?

Gender	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Race	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexuality/Transgender	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Faith	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

2. Summarise the likely negative impacts.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There may be discriminatory practices • Lack of understanding of cultural, religious or personal issues – may lead to insensitive actions to bring empty properties back into use, or to reasonable standard

3. What previous or planned consultation on this topic/policy area/project has taken place/will take place with groups/individuals from equality target groups?

If there has already been consultation what does it indicate about negative impact of this strategy, project or policy?

Approx 140 people from housing and support providers, private landlords, housing and homeless forum members were consulted on the strategy. Unfortunately – only 5 responses were received.

Equality target groups	Summary of consultation carried out or planned
Women	Women included in the consultation on the Empty Property Strategy. Out of 5 responses – 2 were women
Black and minority ethnic communities	<p>Consultation included a predominantly BME Housing Association – who sent a response They highlighted that in some areas – concentrations of empty properties were in areas of high BME populations – and therefore these would be disproportionately effected.</p> <p>However, no analysis has yet been carried out on this for Erewash.</p> <p>Did not monitor BME of consultees.</p>
Disabled people	Disabled groups were not specifically consulted.

	Did not monitor disability of consultees
Lesbians, gay men, bisexuals or trans people	LGBT groups were not specifically consulted.
Older people	Did not monitor sexual orientation of consultees Older People representatives were not specifically consulted.
Young people/children	Did not monitor age of consultees Younger People representatives were not specifically consulted.
Faith groups	Did not monitor age of consultees Faith group representatives were not specifically consulted.
	Did not monitor faith/belief of consultees

4. What consultation has taken place/or is planned with Council staff – including staff that have, or will have, direct experience of implementing the strategy/ policy/ working on the project?

Staff in Environmental services, development control, housing renewal team, housing strategy, homelessness and housing advice were consulted.

5. Check that research /studies/reports concerning the equality target groups and the likely impact have been used to plan the project and guide it or indicate what research you intend to carry out.

Equality target groups	Title/type/details of report/research
Women	The whole consultation process in the development of the Empty Property Strategy was aimed at targeting all interested stakeholders irrespective of their demographics
Black and minority ethnic communities	The whole consultation process in the development of the Empty Property Strategy was aimed at targeting all interested stakeholders irrespective of their demographics However, there is work to be carried out on housing needs, barriers to access with focus groups of BME communities in 2008. The Empty Property Strategy, grants etc will be discussed as part of this.
Disabled people	The whole consultation process in the development of the Empty Property Strategy was aimed at targeting all interested stakeholders irrespective of their demographics However, there is work to be carried out on housing needs, barriers to access with focus groups of Disabled and Older People communities in 2008. The Empty Property Strategy, grants etc will be discussed as part of this.
Lesbians, gay men, bisexuals or trans people	The whole consultation process in the development of the Empty Property Strategy was aimed at targeting all interested stakeholders irrespective of their demographics
Older people	The whole consultation process in the development of the Empty Property Strategy was aimed at targeting all interested stakeholders irrespective of their

	demographics However, there is work to be carried out on housing needs, barriers to access with focus groups of Disabled and Older People communities in 2008. The Empty Property Strategy, grants etc will be discussed as part of this.
Young people/children	The whole consultation process in the development of the Empty Property Strategy was aimed at targeting all interested stakeholders irrespective of their demographics
Faith groups	The whole consultation process in the development of the Empty Property Strategy was aimed at targeting all interested stakeholders irrespective of their demographics

6. If there are gaps in your previous or planned consultation and research, are there any experts/relevant groups that can be contacted to get further views or evidence on the issues.

YES (Please list them and explain how you will obtain their views)

None identified at present

Part b

Complete this section when consultation and research has been carried out

7. a) As a result of this assessment and available evidence collected, including consultation, state whether there will need to be any changes made/planned to the policy, strategy or project.

A new Action to be added: Monitor, evaluate and report on the Equality Impact of all areas of service, and practice with regard to empty properties. By: All staff dealing with Empty Property Issues.

If monitoring shows that there is inequitable treatment of different communities – this would have to be addressed, and highlighted in a review or amendment to the strategy.

b) As a result of this assessment and available evidence is it important that the Council commissions specific research on this issue or carry out monitoring/ data collection?

Improvements to the collection, evaluation and reporting on Equality monitoring information. By all staff dealing with empty property issues.

(You may wish to put this information directly onto the action sheet at the end of this form)

8. Will the changes planned ensure that negative impact is:

Legal?

(Not discriminatory, under anti-discriminatory legislation)

Intended?

Low impact?

9. a) Have you set up a monitoring/evaluation/ review process to check the successful implementation of the strategy, project or policy?

YES

NO

Empty Property Strategy Review/Steering group monitor the progress on a bi-monthly basis and report to Housing and Homeless forum, RSL forum at each meeting. Annual report produced to Members and other stakeholders

- b) How will this monitoring/evaluation further assess the impact on the equality target groups/ensure the strategy/project/policy is non-discriminatory?

Details: Will ensure adequate monitoring of empty property grants, advice, and consultation. Analyse whether this highlights any inequitable or discriminatory practices. Tackle any inequitable or discriminatory practices.

Please complete the action form below, sign the EQIA, retain a copy and send a copy of the full EQIA, including the Action Plan, Executive office.

Signed: Tessa Paul

Date: November 2007

Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan

Please list below any recommendations for action that you plan to take as a result of this impact assessment.

Issue	Action required	Lead officer	Timescale	Resource implications	Comments
Ensure Equality Impact is an ongoing process	Additional action on Action Plan of Strategy	Tessa Paul	By January 2008	Staff time	
Failure to adequately monitor, evaluate and report Equality issues re empty properties	Retrospective monitoring of consultees	Tessa Paul	By January 15 th 2008	Staff time	
	Ensure monitoring and adequate evaluation and reporting of Equalities information for all services re Empty Properties	Ian McHugh Sylvia Wilson	Ongoing From January 2008	Staff time	
	Ensure future monitoring of tenants of empty properties schemes	Tessa Paul	Ongoing from 2008	Staff time	
Lack of understanding of BME cultural, faith/belief issues re empty properties	Research through internet, existing literature, BME contacts re any issues.	Tessa Paul	By December 2008	Bid for EBC funding for 2008/09	
	Ask BME focus groups in Housing needs research	Tessa Paul			
Lack of understanding re Older People's need to keep family home	Monitor reasons why people have been keeping properties empty	Sylvia Wilson	Ongoing from January 2008	Staff time	
	Ask Older People focus groups in Housing Needs research	Tessa Paul	By December 2008	Bid for EBC funding for 2008/09	
Carers needs to retain home whilst living elsewhere to care for relative	Monitor reasons why people have been keeping properties empty	Sylvia Wilson	Ongoing from January 2008	Staff time	
	Ensure staff deal sensitively with such issues	Ian McHugh	From January 2008	As part of general equalities training	