



Allocations Policy - Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

The Equality Act 2010 replaces the previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. It simplifies the law, removing inconsistencies and making it easier for people to understand and comply with it. It also strengthens the law in important ways, to help tackle discrimination and equality. The majority of the Act came into force on 1 October 2010.

The public sector Equality Duty came into force on 5 April 2011. The duty ensures that all public bodies play their part in making society fairer by tackling discrimination and providing equality of opportunity for all. It ensures that public bodies consider the needs of all individuals in their day to day work – in shaping policy, delivering services and in relation to their own employees.

The Equality Duty encourages public bodies to understand how different people will be affected by their activities so that policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people's needs. By understanding the effect of their activities on different people, and how inclusive public services can support and open up people's opportunities, public bodies are better placed to deliver policies and services that are efficient and effective.

MDH is required by law to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, and
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

EIA will be carried out by MDH in respect of new or revised policies and a copy of the assessment will be made available. Where it is clear from initial consideration that a policy will not have any effect on equality for any of the protected characteristics, no further analysis or action will be necessary.

Service:	Mid Devon Housing
Name of policy being assessed:	Allocations Policy
Lead officer responsible for EIA:	Operations Manager for Housing Management Services
Is this a new or existing policy:	New combined policy
<p>1. What are the aims and objectives of the policy?</p> <p>MDH's allocation policy deals with local, specific issues outside of the scope of the DHC policy.</p> <p>It sets out exceptions to DHC policy.</p> <p>In exceptional circumstances, MDH reserves the right to depart from any aspect of the policy.</p> <p>Any decision to depart from the policy will be taken by the Operations Manager for Housing Services</p>	
<p>2. What outcome do MDH want to achieve from this policy?</p> <p>It is Mid Devon Housing's (MDH's) policy to offer applicants a choice of accommodation where possible. This is achieved through the operation of a Choice Based Lettings system, Devon Home Choice (DHC).</p> <p>Within Mid Devon, there is a high demand for accommodation but a very limited supply of social housing. Whilst MDH is committed to delivering new social homes, there will still be a large imbalance between the number of applicants seeking social housing, and the relatively low number of properties which are available.</p> <p>In this context, the allocations policy allows MDH to allocate this scarce resource as fairly as possible whilst ensuring that everyone has fair access to social housing.</p> <p>In framing the allocations policy, regard has been given to the Homelessness Strategy and Tenancy Strategy</p>	
<p>3. Who is intended to benefit from the policy?</p> <p>The Allocation Policy will apply to all applicants applying for a Mid Devon Home</p>	
<p>4. Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the policy?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All tenants 	
<p>5. Do you have baseline qualitative data for this policy relating to different equality strands?</p> <p>All potential tenants of MDH will be covered by the Allocations Policy. This policy will ensure that a consistent, fair approach is taken when administering applicant's rights.</p>	

6. What has stakeholder consultation, if carried out, revealed about the nature of the impact?

The contents of the Allocations Policy provides guidance as to how MDH will respond to the rights and responsibilities of tenants and applicants.

As there are no changes to the policy, only a refresh and reconfiguration of the document, no stakeholder consultation has taken place.

Internal consultation with the relevant officers has taken place to ensure the document covers all aspects required of us and meets the needs of MDH and our tenants or applicants.

7. From the evidence you have, does the policy affect or have the potential to affect different equality groups in different ways?

The Housing Act 1996 as amended requires all Councils to give 'reasonable preference' in their allocations scheme to groups in high housing need, such as the homeless, people with medical or welfare needs, or those living in overcrowded, insanitary or unsatisfactory circumstances.

8. Is this policy likely to be equally accessed by all equality groups or communities?

The DHC application form incorporates questions to establish whether an applicant is in one of the reasonable preference categories. A full explanation of reasonable preference groups are listed in the DHC Policy - DHC Policy - Reasonable Preference (3.9.13)

9. Are there barriers that might make access to the policy difficult for equality groups or communities?

MDH will maximise access for all groups applying for a Mid Devon Home

Support services are able to attend sign-up to ensure that the tenant understands their rights and responsibilities before signing the tenancy agreement.

10. Could the policy promote or contribute to equality and good relations between different groups?

The policy may raise awareness between officers and tenants/applicants regarding the rights of tenants/applicants. The policy highlights local letting plans which serve to achieve agreed objectives.

The policy will ensure a consistent approach is taken when exercising our duties within the current legal and policy framework.

11. What further evidence is needed to understand the impact on equality?

MDH will use existing performance monitoring data to establish whether there has been any negative or positive impact on applicants and their ability to access services.

12. On the basis of the analysis above, what actions, if any, will MDH need to take in respect of each of the equality strands?

Characteristic:	Impact: Please <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> the relevant box		Comments/Action:
Age:	Positive		No action needed.
	Neutral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Introductory tenancies will be offered to all new tenants, regardless of age.
	Negative		Preference to those over 55 years of age if the property was previously categorised as 'sheltered'
Disability: You're disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities.	Positive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Pre-sign up, prospective tenants that would be classed as vulnerable will be identified and additional support services will be accessed.
	Neutral		Preference to allocations to applicants requiring adapted properties
	Negative		An applicant's accessibility need will be included in both the initial registration and the renewal letter, with a request that applicants make contact if they feel this is wrong.
Gender:	Positive		No further action needed
	Neutral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Negative		
Gender reassignment:	Positive		No further action needed
	Neutral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Negative		
Marriage and civil partnership:	Positive		No further action needed
	Neutral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Negative		
Pregnancy and Maternity:	Positive		No further action needed
	Neutral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Negative		
Race:	Positive		No further action needed. Regular monitoring may identify reasons not identified. Action will be taken to mitigate any barriers identified.
	Neutral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Negative		
Religion and Belief:	Positive		No further action needed. Regular monitoring may identify reasons not identified. Action will be taken to mitigate any barriers identified.
	Neutral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Negative		
Sexual Orientation:	Positive		

	Neutral	✓	No further action needed. Regular monitoring may identify reasons not identified. Action will be taken to mitigate any barriers identified
	Negative		

Monitoring and Review:

MDH will regularly review the EIA, in line with legislative changes or good practice, or if the policy impacts any group directly.

Operations Manager for Housing Management Services

Signed: