

## Equality Impact Assessment and Analysis

### Homelessness Review

NB. This EqIAA should be read in conjunction with the Homelessness Review 2013.

Chapter 3 of the Homelessness Review 2013 included an analysis of those approaching the Council for housing advice and the reason for homelessness for those to whom a statutory duty to accommodate was accepted.

For ease the relevant tables are copied here:

1) Reason for approach for those presenting during January 2013 for housing advice:

	%
AST	24
Parents	16
Family/Friends	10
Relationship Breakdown	17
DV	4
Eviction from supported or perm tenancy	3
Single non priority	19
Harassment	2
Hospital	1.5
Mortgage arrears	1.5
Other	3

2) Reason for homelessness for those with duty accepted, last 3 years:

	2010/11 %	2011/12 %	2012/13 %
Parental eviction	24	23	20
Told to leave by friends/relatives	10	10	10
Relationship breakdown (non-violent)	7	11	8
Relationship breakdown (violent)	13	16	5
Hate crime/ other harassment/violence	5	1	2
Mortgage arrears	1	2.5	4
Rent arrears – RSL	0	0	0
Rent arrears – private sector	3	3	6
Termination of AST – other reasons	28	27	34
Leaving institution or care	5	1	5
Asylum seeker	1	1	1
Other	2	4	5
emergency	0	0	1
<b>Total (actual number)</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>141</b>

The tables indicate that the top three reasons for being threatened with homelessness or becoming homeless are:

1. Loss of AST
2. Being asked to leave by family or friends
3. Relationship breakdown.

Tables relating to homelessness are also published on the Council website: [Table 784: local authorities' action under the homelessness provisions of the 1985 and 1996 Housing Acts: financial years 2004-05 to 2012-13, by local authority](#)

Table 1 above also shows that presentations from single people with no priority need represent a high proportion of those presenting.

These reasons have been carefully considered in respect of the protected characteristics set out within the Equality Act 2010 and impact in relation to homelessness, with the following issues emerging:

- Loss of AST – is more likely to impact on those who can't afford to buy and is more likely to be younger households. In addition, it may have a high relevance for people from a BAME background, who are disproportionately accommodated within this tenure, as well as Disabled People. There is clear evidence to show that the following groups have proportionately lower levels of income:-
  - 1) disabled people<sup>1</sup>
  - 2) older people<sup>2 3</sup>
  - 3) people from minority ethnic backgrounds<sup>4</sup>
- Homelessness amongst older people tends not to be a factor within South Gloucestershire and this is mainly because opportunities for re-housing into dedicated older persons accommodation are greater than for the general population.
- Those whose family or friends are no longer able to accommodate are more likely to be young people and newly forming households, and single people without their own established home.
  - Those who have experienced a relationship breakdown and who are unable to afford to access housing independently.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Guy Parckar, Leonard Cheshire Disability, 2008. Figures based on the 'relative poverty line' in the UK, which equates to living in a household with income of less than 60% of median national income. Recent estimates suggest that around 30% of disabled people live below this income line, compared to around 16% of non-disabled people.

<sup>2</sup> One in six pensioners (1.8 million or 16% of pensioners in the UK) live in poverty, defined as 60% of median income after housing costs. Pensioners are also the biggest group of people on the brink of poverty with 1.2 million on the edge. Women, those age 80 to 84, single people living alone, private tenants, and Pakistani and Bangladeshi people are at greater risk of pensioner poverty. *Source: Age UK*

<sup>3</sup> Source: Office for Disability issues

- In Britain over 10 million people have a limiting long term illness, impairment or disability - this is over 18 per cent of the population.
- The most common types of impairment for adults in Britain are those associated with a difficulty in mobility, lifting and carrying.
- The occurrence of disability increases with age - around 1 in 20 children are disabled, compared to around 1 in 7 working age adults and almost 1 in 2 people over state pension age.
- The likelihood of multiple impairments increases with age.

<sup>4</sup> Source: Joseph Rowntree Foundation programme paper: *Poverty and ethnicity. Inequality within ethnic groups.* Lucinda Platt, May 2011. ISBN 978 1 85935 813 9

The priorities of the Homelessness Strategy therefore arose from careful consideration of groups likely to be affected.

### Prevention

A continued focus on intensive and integrated case work approach to housing advice and homelessness prevention

- Therefore the inclusion of this priority is likely to have a positive impact on the identified groups.

### Private Rented Sector

To take best advantage of the opportunities arising from the growth of the private rented sector by expanding the offer to private landlords to work with the Council and its partners

- Focusing on this priority brings with it the possibility to deliver more properties available for homelessness prevention and for discharge of duty (self-contained and shared housing) and will have a positive impact on homelessness overall.

### Youth Homelessness

To continue with a dedicated Youth Housing Strategy with a particular focus on early years prevention and alternatives to B & B.

- The numbers of young people approaching housing services has increased. This priority is aimed at addressing this specifically and finding solutions.

### Partnership Working

To have strong arrangements for a consistent approach and collective responsibility for homelessness prevention and early referral from all agencies

- This provides good opportunities to share equalities information with our partners and devise co-ordinated responses.

### Single Non-Priority Households

A review and reconsideration of the services, support and solutions available to Single Non-Priority Households experiencing homelessness.

- It is considered that this group is proportionately more likely to be made up of those under aged 35 and is more likely weighted towards males, including ex-offenders. Therefore the inclusion of this priority seeks to have a positive impact on their opportunities to access accommodation. Actions around this will include a set of data collection to establish the characteristics of this group.

### Affordability of Housing

To consider how households can be supported to access accommodation that is affordable to them. Welfare reform measures are likely to have an impact on homelessness particularly with the introduction of the benefit cap and universal credit. This needs further case work analysis and monitoring of findings arising from pilots being conducted nationally.

- This will work to consider equalities issues that make accessing accommodation more unaffordable for some groups (e.g. those receiving means tested benefits) outside the affordability issues generally faced by those seeking suitable accommodation.

This EqIAA also notes that:

- Harassment
- Domestic Violence
- Relationship breakdown (violent)
- Hate crime/ other harassment/violence
- Asylum Seekers

are identified as reasons for homelessness and approach and these issues specifically relate to the aims of the General Equality Duty. Considering the three aims of the General Equality Duty, as shown below, these are important issues to ensure provision for during the development of specific actions which will be designed to deliver against the stated priorities.

The aims of the General Equality Duty are to have due regard to the need to:

- 1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;**
- 2. Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;** this means:-
  - removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.
  - taking steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it.
  - encouraging persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- 3. Foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;** this means:-
  - tackling prejudice.
  - promoting understanding.

### **EqIAA outcome**

This EqIAA has identified no equalities issues at this stage which may have a negative impact for any particular protected characteristic group. It is important to note that this is a Homelessness Strategy which provides information on a range of strategic priorities. Each of these priorities, as an integral part of its delivery, would assess and analyse equalities impacts in relation to the specific actions which will be taken to deliver against the priorities. This ensures the on-going identification of a full range of equalities issues emerging and allows for the consideration of ways to deliver against the three aims of the Equality Duty within the context of homelessness services in South Gloucestershire. This EqIAA in relation to the Homelessness Strategy identified equalities issues to be robustly addressed in relation to the specific actions which will aim to deliver against the strategic priorities stated.

## **Actions moving forward**

Arrangements will be put in place for the continuous monitoring of each of the priorities, including any unintended consequences that may be felt by any particular groups.

Development of specific actions to deliver against the stated priorities will take account of the issues emerging within this EqIAA and identify approaches to address the impacts identified.

To ensure that identified equalities issues are shared and are central within partnership working.