

Estimated time taken to complete: 2 hours*

*Please note that this should be a working document, compiled throughout the creation of the linked project



Void Management Policy

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) Form

April 2024 – April 2026

Date created	April 2024
Approved by	Cabinet
Owner	Denise Lewis – Assistant Director Building Safety and Housing Property Services
Version	1
Author	Lori Smith – Empty Homes Manager
Business Unit and Team	Building Safety and Housing Property Services: Housing Asset Management

Please [click this link](#) to find the EqIA guidance toolkit for support in completing the following form.

For translations, braille or large print versions of this document please email equalities@stevenage.gov.uk.

Equality Impact Assessment Form

For a policy, project, strategy, staff or service change, or other decision that is new, changing or under review

What is being assessed?		Voids Management Policy – Residential Properties			
Lead Assessor	Lori Smith, Empty Homes Manager, Stevenage Borough Council			Assessment team	Claire Warren, Empty Homes Coordinator, Stevenage Borough Council
Start date	April 2024 (reviewed Feb 2025)	End date	April 2026		Andrew Garside, Head of Housing Asset Management, Stevenage Borough Council.
When will the EqlA be reviewed? (Typically every 2 years)	April 2026				Lynne Huggins, Programme Manager, Stevenage Borough Council.

Who may be affected by the proposed project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prospective tenants • Current tenants • Staff at Stevenage Borough Council
What are the key aims of the proposed project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detail the approach to the management of void properties to be relet. • Ensure that our customers are treated in a fair and consistent way. • Focus on working in partnership with tenants and leaseholders ensuring that a safe, warm and healthy home is provided. • Ensure that homes are relet in a condition which meets the lettable standard and the internal environment is safe, warm and free from hazards and the fabric of the property is protected from damage. • Comply with statutory and regulatory requirements and good practice where applicable. • Maximise the available budgets and ensure that they are used effectively and efficiently to offer value for money. • Minimise rent loss.

What **positive measures** are in place (if any) to help **fulfil our legislative duties** to:

Remove discrimination & harassment	Ensuring all are treated fairly and in a consistent way.	Promote equal opportunities	Demonstrating what level of service and standards can be expected from the council for all incoming tenants.	Encourage good relations	Delivering to an agreed Lettable Standard will build confidence with tenants. Encourage partnership working internally and externally
------------------------------------	--	-----------------------------	--	--------------------------	---

What sources of data / information are you using to inform your assessment?	<p>Housing and Planning Act 1985</p> <p>Equality Act 2010</p> <p>Homelessness Act 1996</p> <p>Housing Health and Safety Rating System (defined within the Housing Act 2004)</p> <p>Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012</p> <p>NEC – Housing management internal system</p> <p>Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2024</p>
---	---

In assessing the potential impact on people, are there any overall comments that you would like to make?	<p>It is important that, as a Local Authority, the impact this Policy may have on people moving into a property owned by Stevenage Borough Council (SBC) is monitored and assessed to ensure that there is no indirect, or direct, discrimination, contrary to the public sector equality duty. SBC are morally and legally accountable for ensuring homes are maintained to a standard and ensuring that doesn't put any individuals or marginalised groups at a disadvantage.</p> <p>It is understood there is a proportion of customers who will be considered vulnerable. In these instances, SBC will make reasonable adjustments on a case by case basis to support them as best as</p>
--	---

	possible. Refresher training and raising awareness to staff on Equality Act 2010 will help promote equality and inclusion overall going forward.
--	--

Evidence and Impact Assessment

Explain the potential impact and opportunities it could have for people in terms of the following characteristics, where applicable:

Age					
Positive impact	Yes	Negative impact		Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	<p>This policy will ensure any vulnerabilities linked to age will be considered when detailing the lettable standard for Housing for older people (independent living / flexi care schemes).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lettable standard (including decoration for Housing for older people (independent living / flexi care schemes). <p>Others going into general needs properties will be supplied with decorating vouchers.</p>				
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	Promotion of ILS / flexi schemes as properties that are decorated to a good standard.		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	N/A	

Disability e.g., physical impairment, mental ill health, learning difficulties, long-standing illness					
Positive impact	Yes	Negative impact		Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	<p>This policy will ensure any vulnerabilities linked to disabilities will be considered in line with the aids and adaptations policy:</p> <p>The Council has a specific policy relating to Aids and Adaptations, which is available online - Aids and Adaptations Policy (stevenage.gov.uk).</p> <p>SBC have taken these data sources into account - Herts Insight Diversity Profile - Disability https://www.reports.esriuk.com/view-report/638ca3f75a2541799e068399579d719e/E07000243</p> <p>2021 Census Profile: https://www.reports.esriuk.com/view-report/79b7917a1c72415ea39bca5ed45c6094/E10000015?clear=true https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censusareachanges/E07000243/ - latest changes in Stevenage.</p>				
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	To ensure the policy is clear and transparent, ensuring all disabled tenants receive equitable treatment and service.		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	N/A	

Gender Reassignment					
Positive impact	N/A	Negative impact	N/A	Unequal impact	N/A
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	No impact – this is not something that we assess or discriminate against in the management of empty homes.				

What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	N/A	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	N/A

Marriage or Civil Partnership					
Positive impact	N/A	Negative impact	N/A	Unequal impact	N/A
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	N/A				
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	N/A	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	N/A		

Pregnancy & Maternity					
Positive impact	N/A	Negative impact	N/A	Unequal impact	N/A
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	N/A				
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	N/A	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	N/A N/A		

Race					
Positive impact	N/A	Negative impact	N/AN	Unequal impact	N/A
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	Not impacted – not compulsory question for recording tenant profile. It is not something that we assess or discriminate against in the management of empty homes.				
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	N/A		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	N/A	

Religion or Belief					
Positive impact	N/A	Negative impact	N/A	Unequal impact	N/A
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	Not impacted – not compulsory question for recording tenant profile. It is not something that we assess or discriminate against in the management of empty homes.				
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	N/A		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	N/A	

Sex					
Positive impact	N/A	Negative impact	N/A	Unequal impact	N/A

Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	Not impacted – not compulsory question for recording tenant profile. It is not something that we assess or discriminate against in the management of empty homes.		
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	N/A	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	N/A

Sexual Orientation e.g., straight, lesbian / gay, bisexual					
Positive impact	N/A	Negative impact	N/A	Unequal impact	N/A
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	Not impacted – not compulsory question for recording tenant profile. It is not something that we assess or discriminate against in the management of empty homes.				
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	N/A	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	N/A		

Socio-economic¹ e.g., low income, unemployed, homelessness, caring responsibilities, access to internet, public transport users, social value in procurement					
Positive impact	Yes	Negative impact		Unequal impact	

¹Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.

<p>Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment</p>	<p>Each property provided by SBC will not differ in standard. Decorating vouchers are provided to every general needs property if redecoration has not already been carried out by contractors/in-house team. Issuing decorating vouchers will significantly help those with lower socio-economic status.</p> <p>We have taken these data sources into account -Herts Insight Economy, Work & Education Profile</p> <p>https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/herts-insight/topics/economy-work-and-education.aspx</p> <p>https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censusareachanges/E07000243/ - latest changes in Stevenage</p>		
<p>What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)</p>	<p>N/A</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">Additional Considerations</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Please outline any other potential impact on people in any other contexts</p>					
<p>Positive impact</p>		<p>Negative impact</p>		<p>Unequal impact</p>	
<p>Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment</p>					
<p>What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?</p>			<p>What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)</p>		

Consultation Findings

Document any feedback gained from the following groups of people:

<p>Staff?</p>	<p>TBD</p>	<p>Residents?</p>	<p>TBD</p>
---------------	------------	-------------------	------------

Voluntary & community sector?	TBD	Partners?	N/A
Other stakeholders?	TBD		

Overall Conclusion & Future Activity

Explain the overall findings of the assessment and reasons for outcome (please choose one) :	
1. No inequality, inclusion issues or opportunities to further improve have been identified	This EqIA demonstrates the proposed policy is robust and there is no potential for discrimination or adverse impact. All opportunities to promote equality have been taken.
Negative / unequal impact, barriers to inclusion or improvement opportunities identified	2a. Adjustments made
	2b. Continue as planned
	2c. Stop and remove

Detail the actions that are needed as a result of this assessment and how they will help to remove discrimination & harassment, promote equal opportunities and / or encourage good relations :				
Action	Will this help to remove, promote and / or encourage?	Responsible officer	Deadline	How will this be embedded as business as usual?
Equality Act 2010 Training for staff	Ensure staff have refresher training on act to ensure equality is promoted.	Andrew Garside		On-going training review

Approved by Assistant Director: Denise Lewis

Date: February 2025