



WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

1. Policy details

Policy Title	1000 New Build Council Houses Programme
Policy Lead Officer	Colin Miller
Others Involved	Fiona Taylor

2. Summary of policy aims

Our vision is 'to improve lives and properties by designing and maintaining communities, homes and buildings'.

A key aim of the 1000 Houses programme is to ensure that the type of housing constructed meets current and future needs of people in West Lothian who seek affordable housing. It builds on the investment priorities of the LHS and the SHIP.

The main outcomes of the 1000 houses programme accord with those of the LHS:

LHS Theme

Meeting Housing Need and Demand

Housing Options

Independent Living

Improving Communities

House Condition

Fuel Poverty and Climate Change

LHS Outcome

People in West Lothian can find a suitable place to live and have quality options available to them.

Homelessness is prevented for people in West Lothian as far as possible. Effective advice and support is in place for people who become homeless.

People in West Lothian can access the appropriate range of care and support services enabling them to live independently in their own homes where they choose to do so.

Our communities are attractive, safe places to live and work

Improve house condition in West Lothian

People facing fuel poverty can access the help and support they need. People in West Lothian live in energy efficient housing.

Improve sustainability of existing housing.

3. Key issues and judgements

Age Equality

All housing proposed in the 1000 Houses will be built to Housing for Varying Needs Standards. This is to ensure the housing is accessible to a wide range of the population regardless of age. In planning the provision, specific consideration has been given to the type of housing for an ageing population recognising that people will often have a range of needs and provision for older people will therefore be in bungalow and ground floor flatted accommodation, which can be adapted as required. A total of 146 bungalows are currently planned in addition to the ground floor accommodation. This accounts for over 14% of the 1000 Houses programme.

Disability

As the council housing will include a large proportion of bungalows these will accommodate people with disabilities, allowing them to live independently. Close consideration has been given to issues such as the locality of the developments and the landscaping around the houses to ensure accessibility for disabled people. Each bungalow will have in-curtilage parking to allow ease of access to the property for disabled tenants and their visitors. Particular attention is given to the location of footpaths in consideration of the design of the project layouts and discussion takes place with the OTs to determine optimum location.

Ground floor accommodation in cottage flats and terraced or semi-detached properties will also provide a flexible house type for people with a range of needs including those with mobility issues. In addition, core and cluster accommodation will also be provided within the programme for people with learning disabilities to ensure that they can live as independently as possible within the community, with the support they require. Specifically, small core and cluster housing will be incorporated in 2 areas and will be identical in form to the mainstream housing. This will complement and augment the provision proposed in the SHIP by RSLs for people with particular needs, in particular the West Lothian Development Alliance and Bield Housing Association.

Gender Equality and Gender Identity

There are no specific Gender Equality and Gender Identity equality issues that apply to the 1000 Houses Programme. Access to housing that is provided through the programme will be subject to the allocation policy developed by the Council which will in turn also be subject to relevant equalities legislation.

Pregnancy and maternity

There are no specific pregnancies or maternity equality issues that apply to the 1000 Houses Programme.

Race Equality

In planning for new housing provision the Council has considered issues relating to ethnic minorities. This has included interrogation of census data on housing need and demand which is particular to different racial groups. Examples of these particular characteristics are household size and age distribution, and accessibility to housing where language or communication may be an issue. Particular consideration has also been given to census data which indicates the age "bulge" of ethnic groups which is anticipated amongst older people in

the future, and the high rate of increase of Polish immigrants in West Lothian (third highest local authority area in Scotland.)

In the 1000 Houses programme 166 new units (17%) are planned to provide 3 bedrooms or more. This follows a recommendation in the Assessing the Housing Needs of Minority Ethnic Communities in West Lothian which indicates the need for larger family accommodation for ethnic minorities.

The Gypsy Travellers Officer outreach services have been further developed to include networking with other local authorities and agencies, such as Police Scotland.

The provision of physical housing will be a fit for all household types, however, and will be allocated accordingly. The Council Allocation Policy, which is currently under review and due for approval in 2015 will be Equality Impact Assessed to ensure that no particularly minority group is disadvantaged through the delivery of the new Council Housing.

Religion or belief/Sexual orientation and Transgender

There are no specific religion or belief, sexual orientation or transgender equality issues that apply to the 1000 Houses. Access to housing provided through the programme will be subject to the revised Council Allocation Policy which is regulated by the Scottish Government and which is subject to relevant equalities legislation and good practice.

4. Summary of consultation and involvement

Consultation has been undertaken with a wide range of different groups in West Lothian.

Examples include:

- Consultation with Tenant forums, with individual tenants and with professionals within and outwith the Council, including NHS, Occupational Therapists and Housing Management.
- Consultation undertaken with WLC Tenants' Panel on design issues such as the specification at Winchburgh Day Centre and design details, such as kitchen colours and kitchen unit types.
- Tenant and resident consultation has been undertaken through a number of other networks, including the WLC Tenants' Panel and Broxburn and Blackburn Community Council.
- The Community Race Forum visited the site at Eliburn, (Phase 2) on completion to provide feedback on design for the 1000 houses specification. A copy of the EIA has been circulated to members of the Forum for comment as part of the wider consultation exercise.
- West Lothian Community Access Committee has been consulted on issues relating to the new build specification on design and layout of the new build.
- As part of the selection for the contractor for the 1000 Houses programme there has been consultation with Social Policy to consider options for specialist provision.
- Staff in Housing and Letting services have consulted on the provision of housing type and mix with NHS professionals, including Occupational Therapists and has resulted in a joint agreement on the size and type of housing to be provided on each site.

5. Key recommendations

Implement proposal with no amendments.

For further information or a copy of the full assessment, please contact:

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Assessments are available in alternative formats or languages on request.

PUBLISHING SUMMARY