

Supporting Good Decisions

Promoting Equality & Human Rights, Reducing Inequality and Protecting the Environment

Integrated Impact Assessment Form

Integrated Impact Assessment Form

Promoting Equality, Human Rights and Sustainability

Title of Policy/ Proposal	Local Housing Strategy 2024-2029
Timescale for Implementation	2024-2029
IIA Completion Date	17/04/2023
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Lead officer	Rebecca Pringle, Housing Strategy Team Manager

Section 1: Screening

1.1 Briefly describe the policy/proposal/activity you are assessing.

Set out a clear understanding of the purpose of the policy/ proposal/ activity being developed or reviewed (e.g. objectives, aims) including the context within which it will operate.

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 requires local authorities to prepare a Local Housing Strategy (LHS) for their area, supported by an assessment of housing need and demand. The new East Lothian Council Local Housing Strategy 2024-29 will replace the existing Local Housing Strategy 2018-2023.

The Local Housing Strategy is the sole strategic document for housing, outlining the key issues and challenges within a changing demographic and economic context. It sets out a strategic vision for housing; priority outcomes and an action plan for the delivery of housing and related services across East Lothian.

The LHS 2024-2029 will contribute towards the delivery of the Scottish Government's Housing to 2040 national strategy with the following aims:

- 'For everyone to have a safe, high quality home that is affordable and meets their needs in the place they want to be'.
- 'For everyone to have access to a home that is affordable and choices about where they live, no matter what tenure they live in'.

- 'For housing to contribute to tackling climate change by 2045 by delivering homes that are warm and affordable to heat and reducing the emissions caused by housing and housing construction.'
- 'For all homes to be good quality, whether they are new build or existing, meaning everyone can expect the same high standards no matter what kind of home or tenure they live in'.

1.2 What will change as a result of this policy?

Local authorities are required by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 to produce a Local Housing Strategy (LHS) every five years. The LHS will impact upon the housing system in operation within the county through a number of strategic actions, which will be monitored and evaluated through the life-time of the LHS 2024-29. Full details of the actions can be found within the LHS 2024-29.

It is intended that the actions of the LHS will collectively contribute to a reduction of inequalities across East Lothian, through increasing choice and availability of housing and housing services. The successful completion of the actions are likely to lead to increases in health and wellbeing across East Lothian. Alongside this IIA, a 'Health Inequalities Impact Matrix' was also completed. The results of which can be found in Supporting Paper 4. It was found that the actions of the LHS 2024-29 will lead to a reduction in stress and anxiety and improve wellbeing across communities.

Deciding if a full Impact Assessment is needed.

Please answer the following questions:

	Yes	No
1. The policy/ proposal has consequences for or affects people e.g. how they can access a service?	X	
2. The policy/proposal has potential to make a significant impact on equality?	X	
3. The policy/proposal is likely to have a significant environmental impact?		X
4. The policy/ proposal has implications for the storage/ collection of personal data?		X

- If you have answered yes to questions 1 and 2 above, please proceed to complete the Integrated Impact Assessment. If you have answered No then an IIA does not need to be completed. Please keep a copy of the screening paperwork.
 - If you have identified that your project will have a significant environmental impact, please proceed to complete the Integrated Impact Assessment. You will also need to consider whether you need to complete a Strategic Environmental Assessment. Please contact
 - If you have answered yes to question 4, please seek further advice from the Data Protection Officer.
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Section 2: Integrated Impact Assessment

2.1 Have those who are affected by the policy had the opportunity to comment on new proposals?

A range of engagement sessions were conducted from February to August 2022. Over 1,000 people across East Lothian took part in engagement activities including:

- Themed online surveys.
- Equalities workshops with Planning Policy, ELH&SCP teams and third sector staff.
- Third sector providers' workshops.
- Lived Experience workshops.
- Workshops with Community Housing and Homelessness Staff.
- Workshops with the Occupational Therapist and Acute Hospital Team.
- Sheltered Housing Engagement Sessions.
- Engagement sessions in each of the Area Partnerships.

A full breakdown of engagement and response rates which fed into the draft LHS can be found in Supporting Paper 1: Engagement and Consultation.

A 12 week public consultation period was launched after publishing the draft Local Housing Strategy. Further information and details on all consultations can also be found within Supporting Paper 1: Engagement and Consultation.

2.2 What information/data have you used to inform the development of the policy to date?

The evidence is based on secondary and primary data collated during 2022 and 2023, and preliminary reports on data and consultation events were carried out prior to developing the LHS 2024-2029. Evidence within reports and the LHS were informed by a range of data sets:

- ONS
- NRS
- Registers of Scotland
- Scotpho
- Hometrack and Rightmove
- Scottish Government – rental data – Centre for Housing Market Analysis
- East Lothian Council data records including: council tax, HL1, HL3, Prevent1, Licensing data
- CACI paycheck
- Home Analytics
- Commissioned reports i.e. Arneil Johnston, Research into the Private Rented Sector in East Lothian
- Scottish Government policy & legislation
- Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD)
- Scottish House Conditions Survey (SHCS)
- Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS)
- Scottish Housing Regulator
- Census
- South East Scotland Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA3)
- Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP)
- Registered Social Landlord records data
- Service Providers records data
- Energy and Climate Intelligence Unit
- East Lothian Health & Social Care Partnership data
- SEPA data
- Ofgem
- Academic journals and policy reports
- Primary Data gathered via online surveys, focus groups, and participation groups

2.3 What does the evidence/ research suggest about the policy’s actual or likely impact on equality groups and those vulnerable/ or experiencing socio-economic disadvantage?

Evidence	Comment
Which groups are in particular need of this service?	<p>Protected and vulnerable groups are likely to be in greater need of housing and housing support services. Most groups covered within the LHS are discussed in section 2.4 of this IIA.</p> <p>The LHS has ambitions to improve access to housing, amenities and services across East Lothian, this will have a positive impact in terms of better access for vulnerable groups.</p>
What level of service uptake/ access is there from protected and vulnerable groups?	<p>The LHS aims to increase housing supply, meeting the needs of the population. This will provide vulnerable individuals with greater access to housing that meets their needs. This will be achieved not only through the provision of new housing but increasing the quality and energy efficiency and accessibility of existing housing.</p>
Can you identify positive outcomes for service users	<p>Attempting to provide equity of choice within the broader housing system across all areas of East Lothian will strengthen opportunities for vulnerable groups to access appropriate housing.</p> <p>Equity of access for those who need it most via an allocations policy which recognises vulnerabilities and inequity will enhance opportunities for vulnerable groups to access housing that meets their needs.</p> <p>Safeguarding the Private Rented Sector (PRS) and improving access and standards will have benefits for all. Conditions in the PRS are in some cases worse than other tenures, increasing awareness of the rights tenants have will allow them to recognise the standards required of accommodation within the PRS.</p> <p>Preparing a mixed tenure improvement policy will ensure energy efficiency and modernisation works can go ahead. Continuing to deliver Energy Efficient Scotland's: Area Based Schemes in the private sector will ensure those most vulnerable to fuel poverty have access to improved fabric.</p> <p>By identifying the needs of specific vulnerable groups and implementing policies that are designed for them, the LHS will reduce the risk of homelessness for vulnerable groups thereby improving health and other outcomes.</p>

	<p>Measures within the LHS relate to improved data collection in future and better recording of vulnerable groups, will allow the Council to more accurately record data in relation to vulnerable groups, enabling targeted support where required. It will also provide a better oversight of uptake and access from protected and vulnerable groups including survivors of domestic abuse, something which is often difficult using current datasets.</p> <p>The proposed widening of trauma informed training across housing will ensure that vulnerable service users receive an appropriate service that is responsive to their needs and understanding of any barriers they may encounter accessing services.</p>
<p>What is the service user experience of those from protected or vulnerable groups?</p>	<p>Engagement indicated that service users may have more than one vulnerability and that cases are increasingly complex. There was also concern that as the number of people with vulnerabilities grows provision is not increasing at the same rate to meet need. Engagement highlighted a need for specialist support for vulnerable people.</p> <p>Concern was also raised about housing those with vulnerabilities in communities that leave them vulnerable, highlighting the importance of a robust allocations process. The LHS 2024-29 envisages reviewing the current process.</p> <p>Service users also mentioned the challenges of navigating different support services and felt that there is a lack of coordination and standardised practice between services. They believed improved coordination could help them receive the support they need and reduce the feeling of being pushed from one service to another.</p>

<p>What opportunity have those from protected groups had to co-produce or comment on the service/ plans?</p>	<p>During the process of writing the LHS focus groups were established. These groups allowed vulnerable people, those who work with them and those who advocate on behalf of them to contribute to the development of the LHS 2024-29.</p> <p>Widespread engagement also took place with lived experience groups including people from sheltered housing, young people experiencing homelessness and people with dementia. Efforts were made to hold additional workshops with some groups including gypsy/travellers, LGBTQ+, Ethnic Minorities and Travelling Showpeople. These workshops did not take place as we were unable to secure participants and services for these groups tended to be based in Edinburgh making local engagement more difficult. Efforts will continue to be made to reach out to these groups in the future.</p> <p>Full details of opportunities to influence the LHS can be found in Supporting Paper 1: Engagement and Consultation.</p>
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2.4 How does the policy meet the different needs of groups in the community?

Equality Groups	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Older people, people in the middle years 	<p>Increasing the supply of affordable housing to meet the needs of all ages within East Lothian will benefit all. It will contribute towards meeting the needs of older people and people in the middle years.</p> <p>The LHS 2024-29 recognises that East Lothian has an aging population. Consequently, older people are one of the main client groups identified in Chapter 5 ‘Housing & Support’ of the LHS 2024-2029. Underpinned by the Older Person’s Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), the LHS has a range of policies and actions focused on older people within the region. This will be positive for older age groups, while being beneficial to those in their middle years in the future. Improving the quality of housing and enabling independent living within the region will benefit those within these age groups,</p>

	<p>particularly in regards to adaptations and Technology Enabled Care which are integral to the LHS 2024-29. Meeting targets set in the LHS will require joint working with Health & Social Care, RSLs as well as other private and third sector organisations.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and young people children 	<p>Policies in the LHS 2024-29 are underpinned by the JSNA with Children’s Services, which assesses the needs of children and young people (C&YP). Groups considered were C&YP with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional needs • LGBTQIA identity • Carer responsibilities • care experienced • disabilities • at risk of/or experiencing homelessness <p>A young people’s survey open to residents in East Lothian aged 16-30 was also conducted to inform policies.</p> <p>As a result of this engagement the LHS 2024-29 will include policies on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The provision of housing and housing support tailored to the needs of young people. - Preventative approaches to reduce the risk of youth homelessness. - Ways in which services can improve access and responses for children and young people.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women, men and transgender people (includes issues relating to pregnancy and maternity) 	<p>The LHS 2024-29 seeks to provide equal opportunities for housing to all across East Lothian. Engagement, consultation and research to inform the LHS was not specifically gendered. However, it did address issues and challenges which unequally affect genders.</p> <p>Consultation workshops were conducted to evaluate the challenges for women subjected to domestic abuse in East Lothian. Workshops highlighted issues including the strong link between homelessness and domestic abuse; prolonged time spent in temporary accommodation; a</p>

	<p>lack of housing options; and gaps in understanding of domestic abuse from services. This was further highlighted in an evaluation of the STRENGTH project (Housing First for women subjected to domestic abuse with co-occurring substance misuse and/or mental health issues). The evaluation highlighted the current gaps in housing services and the need for a gendered, trauma-informed approach across all services.</p> <p>Local data highlights that those serving a prison sentence are most likely male. Consultation workshops, particularly those with the Justice Social Work team, identified the challenges men face when leaving prison, such as an increased risk of homelessness. Consultation identified the need for greater connections between those entering prison and housing/homelessness services.</p> <p>There is currently a gap in understanding the housing needs for those identifying as transgender in East Lothian. However, looking at national trends, it is felt that there is a need for greater understanding of the needs of transgender people across services.</p> <p>LHS actions will promote greater housing options, sustainable communities and inclusivity within services to increase equality across all genders. LHS actions will also address issues that unequally affect genders, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promoting Housing First as the first response to homelessness for those with complex needs.• Introducing a trauma and gendered approach across all services, plans and strategies to recognise trauma and actively resist re-traumatisation.• Contribute towards the Equally Safe Strategy and further support initiatives working towards ending violence against women and girls to ensure people feel safe and experience less crime in their communities.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement learning from the Housing First for Women pilot into standard Community Housing & Homelessness policy and procedures. • Develop and Implement the Sustainable Housing On Release for Everyone (SHORE) protocol. • Explore avenues for information sharing between Justice Social Work and Community Housing & Homelessness.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disabled people (includes physical disability, learning disability, sensory impairment, long-term medical conditions, mental health problems) 	<p>Actions in the LHS 2024-29 regarding those with disabilities (including physical disabilities; learning disabilities; sensory impairment; long-term medical conditions; and mental health problems) was informed through primary, secondary data and engagement.</p> <p>Consultation workshops for the LHS 2024-29 covered a wide range of issues including the need for additional specialist provision housing, delayed discharge and challenges in adapting properties.</p> <p>These challenges were further referenced within Chapter 10 (Particular Needs) of the Local Housing Systems Analysis. The chapter outlined the imbalance between the demand and availability of specialist properties. It was considered that there was an unequal spread of such properties within the county.</p> <p>LHS consultations and Chapter 10 of the LHSA also outlined the increase in mental health support needs for homelessness applicants. It was highlighted that a growing number of those presenting as homeless have complex mental health needs, associated with the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>A Wheelchair Needs Assessment and JSNA for Children and Young People also highlighted the need for wheelchair accessible housing across all tenures. Reference was made to the need for larger homes to accommodate children/families.</p> <p>The LHS will seek to address these issues through actions including:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering 60 units over the lifetime of the LHS for core & cluster housing for EL H&SCP. • Delivering 10% of the affordable housing supply target as wheelchair accessible housing. • Implement a 5% target for wheelchair / accessible housing in the private sector.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minority ethnic people (includes Gypsy/Travellers, migrant workers) 	<p>In preparation for the LHS 2024-29, efforts were made to reach out to ethnic minorities, including Gypsy Travellers and migrant workers. The LHS acknowledges that these communities are harder to reach and that they can face difficulties when trying to access services. Due to the difficulties experienced consulting with Gypsy/Travellers, we consulted the Scottish Government Gypsy/Traveller Team to ensure that we had tried all possible avenues. As a result, a joint meeting was set up with the Scottish Government, COSLA and MECOPP. It was agreed that MECOPP could provide consultation services for a fee to inform the LHS and LDP2. Unfortunately, to date, we have been unable to arrange this due to resource demands on MECOPP.</p> <p>Policies in the LHS 2024-29 consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to increase outreach to these communities and understand their housing need. • Investigate the provision of a permanent Gypsy Traveller Site, stopping places and general needs housing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refugees and asylum seekers 	<p>The LHS recognises the difficulties refugees and asylum seekers face accessing housing. The LHS includes actions to review different forms of support for these communities. The increase in UK and Scottish Government schemes designed to aid refugees and asylum seekers, requires a strategic approach to be adopted by East Lothian Council.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People with different religions or beliefs (includes people with no religion or belief) 	<p>No specific work has been carried out in regards to people with different religions or beliefs (including people with no religion or belief). However, the LHS aims to be an inclusive document supportive of all groups and</p>

	<p>it is not anticipated there will be any negative impacts upon these groups.</p> <p>The LHS aims to deliver affordable and good quality housing provision and services across East Lothian which will benefit all residents. Actions within the LHS promote equality of housing opportunity for all including households with protected characteristics.</p> <p>Improving housing affordability within the region; increasing access to a range of housing options; improving access to specialist housing options and services; and providing targeted information, advice and support to vulnerable households will benefit East Lothian residents including those with different religions or beliefs (including people with no religion or belief). The LHS recognises the upcoming census as a useful tool and it is likely that work will be undertaken to identify any disadvantaged groups when this data is available.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesbian, gay, bisexual and heterosexual people 	<p>The LHS seeks to provide equal housing opportunity, and promote inclusivity across communities and services, regardless of sexual orientation.</p> <p>Trends and secondary research, however, indicates that housing challenges still persists for those within the LGBTQIA+ communities, including youth homelessness. This was highlighted through research for the Children and Young People’s JSNA and an LHS consultation survey for young people. Responses highlighted that, whilst sexual orientation may not have directly led to homelessness, there were a significant number of young people within specialist homelessness accommodation in East Lothian who identified as LGBTQIA+.</p> <p>There is a gap in information regarding sexual orientation due to the way data is recorded by services. This limits the extent of knowledge on housing needs and sexual orientation. The LHS will address issues through promoting equality and within specific actions including:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilising census data 2022, when available, to accurately inform and update policy where necessary. • Provide staff training on LGBTQIA+ to raise awareness and reduce likelihood of discrimination • Understand the risk of mediation approaches in certain circumstances such as LGBTQIA+ matters and offer alternatives.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People who are unmarried, married or in a civil partnership 	<p>No specific work has been carried out in regards to people who are unmarried, married or in a civil partnership. However, the LHS aims to be an inclusive document, supportive of all groups and it is not anticipated there will be any negative impacts upon these groups.</p> <p>The LHS 2024-29 aims to deliver affordable and good quality housing provision and services across East Lothian something which will benefit all residents. Actions within the LHS promote equality of housing opportunity for all, including households with protected characteristics.</p> <p>Improving housing affordability within the region; increasing access to a range of housing options; improving access to specialist housing options and services; and providing targeted information, advice and support to vulnerable households will benefit East Lothian residents, including people who are unmarried, married or in a civil partnership. The LHS recognises the upcoming census as a useful tool and it is likely that work will be undertaken to identify any disadvantaged groups when this data is available.</p>
<p>Those vulnerable to falling into poverty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployed • People on benefits • Lone Parents 	<p>The LHS 2024-29 is intended to provide equal opportunities in housing and reduce gaps in inequality for those falling into poverty.</p> <p>Research to inform the LHS highlighted that those vulnerable to falling into poverty (collectively) are more likely to experience poor housing conditions (including</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care experienced children and young people • Carers (including young carers) • Homeless people • Those involved in the community justice system • People with low literacy/numeracy • Families with 3 or more children • Those with a child/ children under 1 	<p>damp and mould as an effect of fuel poverty), be at a greater risk of homelessness and social isolation, and have fewer available housing options.</p> <p>The LHS will address these general challenges related to those vulnerable to poverty as a collective group through actions including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximising opportunities to accelerate affordable housing. • Continuing to explore and identify innovative financial models with stakeholders to maximise opportunities to deliver more affordable housing. • Fund the Energy Advice Service to support occupiers to run buildings efficiently and effectively, particularly for those households most at risk of fuel poverty. • Provide proactive and person-centred housing options and income maximisation advice to PRS tenants considering leaving the tenure as a result of struggles with affordability of rent and energy costs. <p>Specific actions will also focus on supporting groups vulnerable to poverty with complex housing needs. This includes investigating the use of Housing First, implementing SHORE standards for prison leavers and reviewing the provision of temporary accommodation.</p>
<p>Geographical communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural/ semi-rural communities 	<p>The majority of areas in East Lothian, through the 8-fold urban-rural definition, are classed as being accessible rural areas.</p> <p>As part of the LHS consultation, a targeted survey was produced to highlight the challenges associated with rural housing in East Lothian. Responses to the survey underlined issues including a lack of public transport, access to services/infrastructure and challenges with digital connections. Increasing affordability in rural areas was also highlighted as a key priority for residents, particularly in reference to young people.</p> <p>Secondary research was conducted to produce the LHSA. Chapter 8 (Climate Change and Fuel Poverty) showed the</p>

	<p>age and condition of properties in rural areas. This was related to issues in fuel poverty and the presumed future challenges when bringing houses up to minimum energy efficiency standards- as dictated in the Scottish Government’s Housing to 2040. Chapter 5 (Housing Supply) also highlighted the challenges around affordability in private rented properties in rural areas.</p> <p>The LHS will seek to address the issues associated with rural housing through actions including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing a Local Investment Framework to inform the delivery of affordable housing across East Lothian, including rural areas. • Supporting the provision of affordable housing in rural areas and smaller communities using the Rural Housing Fund while ensuring that development enhances the areas without negatively affecting their character.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban Communities 	<p>The Connected Communities chapter of the LHS, aims to create resilient communities and homes at the heart of great places.</p> <p>The LHS recognises that East Lothian contains a variety of town centres with their own characteristics and supports investment in town centres with a commitment to the Town Centre First Principle and support for more town centre living, where appropriate. There is recognition of the difficulty of balancing the historic nature of many town centres with the need to modernise.</p> <p>The LHS aims to explore opportunities to fund town centre projects that enhance the local community.</p> <p>The LHS 2024-29 supports schemes such as the recently launched CARS (Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme) in Dunbar and views housing as an essential consideration in the regeneration of town centres. The LHS supports community led regeneration, including bringing empty properties back into use, to improve town centres. While analysing rural data use of the Scottish Government’s urban rural classifications urban</p>

	<p>areas are also analysed and any gaps in urban provision identified.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coastal communities 	<p>Coastal communities are an integral part of East Lothian, providing recreational opportunities and supporting the tourism economy. The LHS recognises that coastal communities can be more prone to natural disasters, such as flooding, and that they can face housing challenges such as a high proportion of short term lets and second homes which puts pressures on the housing supply in those communities. Actions in the LHS 2024-29 seeks to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify East Lothian’s residents most vulnerable to climate related disasters. • Investigate need for short term let control areas. • Review the use of council tax income from vacant and second homes to reinvest in affordable housing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those living in the most deprived communities (bottom 20% SIMD areas) 	<p>The LHS aims to promote increased affordable housing options and support those most vulnerable in East Lothian, including those within the most deprived communities, through services.</p> <p>SIMD data is also used to inform the delivery of Energy Efficient Scotland: Area Based Scheme, to provide grants to properties in the private sector in fuel poverty.</p> <p>Actions within the LHS 2024-29 are also targeted at improving knowledge on the extent of deprivation across East Lothian’s locality. This is reflected in actions including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a Local Investment Framework to improve knowledge & understanding of local areas. This information will be used to ensure a balance of affordable tenures / house types is delivered on all new proposed developments. • Utilising census data 2022, when available, to accurately inform and update policy where necessary.

<p>Communication Needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaelic Language Speakers • BSL users • English as a Second Language • Other e.g. DeafBlind, Plain English, Large Print 	<p>No specific work has been carried out in regards to people with communication needs. However, the LHS 2024-29 aims to be an inclusive document, supportive of all groups and it is not anticipated there will be any negative impacts upon these groups.</p> <p>Reference to Sensory Impairments is made within Chapter 5 (Housing & Support), with an action to increase knowledge of the effects of sensory impairment on housing and related services.</p> <p>The LHS aims to deliver affordable and good quality housing provision and services across East Lothian something which will benefit all residents.</p> <p>Actions within the LHS promote equality of housing opportunity for all including households with protected characteristics. Improving housing affordability within the region; increasing access to a range of housing options; improving access to specialist housing options and services; and providing targeted information, advice and support to vulnerable households will benefit East Lothian residents including those with communication needs.</p> <p>The LHS recognises the upcoming census as a useful tool and it is likely that work will be undertaken to identify any disadvantaged groups when this data is available</p>
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2.5 Are there any other factors which will affect the way this policy impacts on the community or staff groups?

A range of factors will affect the way the LHS impacts on the residents of East Lothian, of paramount importance to carry out the actions effectively is access to adequate finance.

- At the time of writing (April 2023), economic uncertainty continues, with high rates of inflation.
- East Lothian Council and East Lothian Health & Social Care Partnership are also expected to make significant savings within their budgets.

- The Scottish Government has reduced the Affordable Housing Supply Programme budget by 4.6%.

2.6 Is any part of this policy/ service to be carried out wholly or partly by contractors?

If yes, how have you included equality and human rights considerations into the contract?

All procurement policy will be guided by corporate procurement procedures and by the Corporate Procurement Strategy.

2.7 Have you considered how you will communicate information about this policy or policy change to those affected e.g. to those with hearing loss, speech impairment or English as a second language?

The Local Housing Strategy will be made available on the Council's online website. An easy read version will also be made available. The 'Accessibility Checker' on Word was used to highlight and solve most accessibility issues within the document, to the best of the team's ability. The website offers accessibility options through the Recite Me translation service allowing people to translate, change contrast and colours and read the website aloud.

Images, charts and tables within the LHS will be provided with Alt Text to increase accessibility of the documents.

The council offers a Translation and Interpretation Service and will respond to requests for the plan to be available in the requested language including BSL. Services arranged include:

- Interpretation in a wide range of world languages;
- Phone interpretation;
- Translation;
- BSL signing;
- Lip-speaking;
- Note-taking;
- Braille;

The service is provided by accredited interpreters and translators. All frontline staff are provided with language charts, which help clients with no English to identify their own language, so that interpretation support can be arranged. Service requests can be also made by emailing translation@eastlothian.gov.uk.

The implementation of individual actions further down the line will be communicated accordingly taking into account the demographics that will be impacted by each individual action.

2.8 Please consider how your policy will impact on each of the following?

Equality and Human rights

- Promotes / advances equality of opportunity e.g. improves access to and quality of services
- Promotes good relations within and between people with protected characteristics and tackles harassment
- Promotes participation, is inclusive and gives people control over decisions which affect them
- Preserves dignity and self-respect of individuals (does not lead to degrading treatment or stigma)
- Builds support networks, resilience, community capacity

Comments:

- Promotes / advances equality of opportunity e.g. improves access to and quality of services

As outlined in section 2.4 above, many of the policies within the LHS focus on improving access to housing services and review policies and procedures for amongst other groups: older people, LGBTQIA+, and ethnic minorities. Therefore it is considered that the LHS will have a positive impact on equality of opportunity.

- Promotes good relations within and between people with protected characteristics and tackles harassment

The LHS does not directly promote good relations within and between people with protected characteristics. LHS actions do seek to reduce existing inequalities which may contribute towards challenging relations and harassment. Therefore, a reduction in inequalities may lead towards better relations and a reduction in harassment as a result. The Connected Communities chapter promotes inclusive and resilient communities that are diverse and accepting. It also includes an action to update the Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy which will impact directly on a reduction of harassment.

- Promotes participation, is inclusive and gives people control over decisions which affect them.

The LHS promotes and welcomes public participation. The preparation of the LHS involved a variety of participation sessions as discussed within section 2.1. Furthermore, a 12 week public consultation period was launched after publishing the draft Local Housing Strategy. Some of the policies promote further public participation and possibilities for further engagement on different actions will be given due consideration.

- Preserves dignity and self-respect of individuals (does not lead to degrading treatment or stigma)

One of the LHS actions is to continue the use of Local Lettings Plans to reduce levels of anti-social behaviour and reduce the negative reputation of certain areas. Other policies focus on awareness training for staff on LGBTQIA+, gender based violence and becoming trauma informed to ensure that people with different characteristics are offered a service which is not discriminatory and ensures their needs are considered appropriately.

- Builds support networks, resilience, community capacity

Some LHS actions focus on community engagement and improved partnership working between services and third party organisations. LHS actions cover topics such as having an infrastructure first approach across rural communities; improved digital connectivity; reduced social isolation in collaboration with local communities; and supporting community led regeneration. The outcome of these actions is to increase resilience and community capacity.

Reduces Poverty

- Maximises income and/or reduces income inequality
- Helps young people into positive destinations
- Aids those returning to and those progressing within the labour market
- Improves employability skills, including literacy and numeracy
- Reduces the costs of taking part in activities and opportunities
- Reduces the cost of living

The LHS supports utilising income maximisation support that is available as a tool to help those experiencing fuel poverty.

The LHS aims to reduce poverty levels and in particular tackle fuel poverty, lowering fuel bills should in theory mean residents are spending a lower proportion of their income on energy and thus reduce poverty.

The LHS aims to help young people into positive destinations by actively supporting children and young people. A number of actions within the LHS are centred on children and young people and, if implemented, will have a positive effect on this demographic.

Through the provision of more affordable housing across East Lothian, the LHS will contribute to the ability of those returning to work and those progressing within the labour market to find suitable accommodation that meets their needs.

The LHS will enhance employability skills, including literacy and numeracy in a broad sense by promoting the growth of the green economy and construction industry, this should result in more skilled employment as well as training opportunities.

By providing affordable housing and promoting 20 minute neighbourhoods the LHS envisages less reliance on cars and more local amenities thus reducing the costs incurred in taking part in activities and opportunities. The LHS actively seeks to reduce the cost of living by providing affordable housing throughout the region as well as tackling fuel poverty within East Lothian.

Protecting the Environment and Improving Sustainability:

- Reduces the need to travel or increases access to sustainable forms of transport
- Minimises waste / encourages resource efficiency / contributes to the circular economy
- Ensures goods / services are from ethical, responsible and sustainable sources
- Improves energy efficiency / uses low carbon energy sources
- Protects and/or enhances natural environments / habitats / biodiversity
- Promotes the transition to a low carbon economy
- Prepares and/or adapts communities for climate change impacts

Comments:

Promotion of 20 minute neighbourhoods should reduce the need to travel, with services provided locally and encourage the use of more sustainable forms of transport.

The LHS encourages resource efficiency and contributes to the circular economy.

The LHS does not directly seek to ensure that goods and services are from ethical, responsible and sustainable sources as this responsibility sits with Procurement.

Through the LHS actions, improvements to energy efficiency are actively encouraged including promotion of low carbon energy sources to heat homes within the region and taking a fabric first approach to energy efficiency meaning residents will not need to use as much energy to stay warm.

The LHS will attempt to protect and/or enhance natural environments / habitats / biodiversity by promoting sustainable housing developments on brownfield sites and the reintegration of empty homes into the housing ecosystem where possible, ensuring that new housing stock is not solely focussed on green field sites.

Promotion of the transition to a low carbon economy through the LHS is supported through the promotion of 20 minute neighbourhoods and exploring low carbon and renewable forms of energy for households within the region.

Preparing and adapting communities for the impacts of climate change is a key challenge within the LHS, the strategy looks at flood defence systems as well as noting areas at risk from flooding in order to make informed choices about where housing should be provided within the region. In addition the strategy and research have also investigated the future challenges that will be brought by warmer summers and wetter weather and how we can adapt our housing to this change.

Section 3.Action Plan

What, if any changes will be made to the proposal/ policy as a result of the assessment?

Changes to be made	Expected outcome of the change	Resources Required	Timeline	Responsible person
Ensure that LHS updates utilise census data	Improved understanding of vulnerable and minority groups within the region	1x Strategy Officers to update relevant data	Lifetime of this LHS	Rebecca Pringle
Continue to make efforts to reach out to those who are less likely to engage in formal	Improved communication and better understanding allowing for more informed policy making decisions.	3x Strategy Officers	Lifetime of this LHS	Rebecca Pringle

consultation processes communities within the region over the lifetime of the LHS.		1x Team Manager		
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For consideration of the Head of Service

Can you identify any cumulative impacts on equality groups or vulnerable people arising from this policy, when considered alongside other changes across other services?

Sign off by Head of Service

Name

Date