



# Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Form

## 1. Service Area/Directorate

Name of Head of Service for activity being assessed: Hayley Crane

Directorate: Community Wellbeing

Name of lead person for this activity: Hannah McSherry

Individual(s) completing this assessment: Hannah McSherry

Date assessment completed: 05.04.26

## 2. What is being assessed

Activity being assessed (eg. policy, procedure, budget, service redesign, strategy etc.)

Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF)

What is the aim, purpose, or intended outcome of this activity?

LAHF is a Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) funded capital grant scheme that supports local authorities in England to obtain housing to use as good quality temporary accommodation for those owed a homelessness duty and to provide safe and suitable accommodation to support families on resettlement schemes.

Herefordshire Council secured funding to deliver 37 new homes through LAHF rounds 1 and 2. We did not bid for funding through LAHF round 3.

The Council has secured funding for 20 new homes through LAHF round 4; 5 for temporary accommodation and 15 for refugee resettlement over a 4-year period.

Who will be affected by the development and implementation of this activity?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service users       | <input type="checkbox"/> Visitors to the county |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communities         | <input type="checkbox"/> Carers                 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Children            | <input type="checkbox"/> Patients               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> All staff                      | <input type="checkbox"/> All part-time staff    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Staff at a particular location | <input type="checkbox"/> Other:                 |

Is this:

- Review of an existing activity/policy
- New activity/policy
- Planning to withdraw or reduce a service, activity or presence?

## 3. Background information and findings

What information and evidence have you reviewed to help inform this assessment? (Name your sources, eg. demographic information, usage data, Census data, feedback, complaints, audits, research)

a) A report based on Government and ONS data published by the charity Shelter in December 2025, revealed some significant inequalities in the populations accessing TA nationally, specifically:

- Black-led households are significantly more likely to be homeless in temporary accommodation compared to other groups. They make up just 4% of the general population but a huge 23% of households in temporary accommodation.
- Lone women with children are also hugely over-represented in temporary accommodation. They make up 22% of families in the general population, but 58% of families in temporary accommodation.

b) Disabled people and people with a long-term condition are also overrepresented amongst households in TA. Information from the charity, Homelessness Impact, suggests that in England the number of households owed a statutory housing duty due to physical disability or ill-health increased by 73% between 2018/19 and 2021/22.

c) The council is a corporate parent for children in care and care leavers. Government data indicates that care leavers are disproportionately affected by homelessness compared with their peers. In 2024/25, 4,610 care leavers aged 18-20 were assessed as facing homelessness, which represents an 11% rate for this group.

d) The number of young care leavers (18-20) facing homelessness has risen by 37% in the last five years, which is over twice as fast as the overall increase in households facing homelessness in England.

e) The Mental Health of Asylum Seekers and Refugees in the UK report published in 2025 highlights how Asylum seekers and refugees are at particular risk of mental health problems. These may develop because of their experiences in their countries of origin, during their journeys, or after they arrive in the UK. Refugees and asylum seekers are often placed in hotel or other contingency accommodation before obtaining secure accommodation which contributes to feelings of dehumanisation. The provision of secure housing through council housing and enabling access to the private rental sector, provides refugees with housing stability, which supports them in rebuilding their lives.

f) Refugees and asylum seekers can have complex health needs. These may be influenced by experiences prior to leaving their home country, during transit or after arrival in the UK and include poorly controlled chronic conditions, untreated communicable diseases, maternity care and mental health. Despite this, there is no evidence that refugees and asylum seekers use a disproportionate share of NHS resources.

g) other challenges faced by Refugees resettling in the UK include language barriers, acceptance or qualifications or a lack of qualifications, lack of meaningful work opportunities, poor housing, community integration, discrimination as well as understanding and accessing healthcare and wider support services.

Summary of engagement or consultation undertaken (eg. who you've engaged with, and how, or why do you believe this is not required)

The following people have been consulted as part of the LAHF application and acceptance process:

Registered Provider partners – as a non-stock holding authority, we are dependent on our social housing partners to deliver this project.

Cabinet Member Community Wellbeing – Cllr Gandy has been briefed about LAHF and a cabinet member decision prepared to accept the funding.

The Council's Refugee Resettlement and Migration Support Team have been briefed as this team will manage the nominations into refugee resettlement properties.

The Housing Solutions Team have been briefed regarding the temporary accommodation element of the fund.

Legal, Governance and Finance colleagues have all been briefed and have supported the governance process.

**Summary of relevant findings** (it is possible that you will have gaps in your evidence. You must decide whether you need to fill in the gaps now, and if it is feasible to do so. It might be that collecting robust information forms part of your action plan below)

The Supporting Afghans on their arrival into the UK is critical in providing a strong foundation for those rebuilding their new life in the UK. The government closed its Afghan resettlement programme in 2025 but expects to resettle thousands more people who were already in the resettlement system, by 2029. Whilst participation is not mandatory, there is a strong expectation that Local Authorities actively support the resettlement process.

Herefordshire has been resettling refugees through formal government resettlement schemes since 2016.

### **Community Integration in Herefordshire:**

Families coming to Herefordshire through the Afghan Resettlement Programme are supported for the first three years of the resettlement process. This support is funded by the Government as part of the resettlement programme.

As well as receiving support from the Council, Afghan families have been welcomed and supported by individuals and voluntary, community and faith sector organisations across Herefordshire. This wider support is invaluable to community integration, and the Council extends its thanks to the community for this.

We understand anecdotally that Afghan families are reluctant to engage with the Police; we do however know about a small number of racially motivated incidents that have occurred since Afghan families have come to live in Herefordshire.

The Council's Refugee Resettlement and Migration Support Team support families resettling into Herefordshire and support them to contact the Police where such incidents occur.

The overall experience of families resettling in Herefordshire has been very positive, with challenges like transport and access to jobs being much greater concerns than any issues around community integration.

The Council have worked with Registered Provider Partners to place families resettling in Herefordshire in areas where there are already some Afghan families. This has been done to reduce isolation and increase community integration as some families are now well established and are able to share their knowledge with new families.

### **Homelessness in Herefordshire:**

The Council has a statutory duty to prevent and relieve homelessness. Nationally, the number of households in temporary accommodation (TA) has reached record levels. Demand continues to grow, both nationally and locally; 93 households were accommodated in TA in January 2023, 148 in January 2024, 156 in January 2025 and 184 in January 2026. Demand for TA is mainly driven by a shortage of social rented housing, the high cost of private rented housing and the increased cost of living. The Council provided 326 households with temporary accommodation during 2024/25.

The limited supply of B&B/ Hotel accommodation in Herefordshire, along with increasing demand and seasonal variations mean the cost of securing short term accommodation for people that are homeless continues to rise

#### 4. The Public Sector Equality Duty

Will this activity have a positive, neutral or negative impact on our duty to:

Equality Duty	Positive	Neutral	Negative
Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advance equality of opportunity between different groups?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foster good relations between different groups?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Explain your rationale here, and include any ways in which you could strengthen the capacity of this activity to promote equality (remember to add anything relevant into your action planning below)

Whilst the number of new homes delivered through LAHF may seem small; the impact on families is significant.

The National Institute for Health and Care Research issued a [report in December 2023](#) that examined the impact of Housing insecurity on the health and wellbeing of children and young people. They consulted that housing insecurity had “multiple impacts, including school-related, psychological, financial and family well-being impacts, long-distance travel to attend school and see friends, living in a poor-condition or unsuitable property, all of which could further exacerbate housing insecurity. These experiences impacted health and well-being, in terms of mental health problems (often manifesting physically/behaviourally) and physical health problems related to poor housing conditions. Some factors lessened the impact of housing insecurity, including friendship and support, staying at the same school, having hope for the future and protective parenting. The negative impacts of housing insecurity on health and well-being may be compounded by specific situations and life circumstances, such as escaping domestic violence, migration status, or a forced relocation due to housing demolition.”

The provision of good quality homes for people in need of temporary accommodation and families resettling in Herefordshire helps to improve outcomes for families and their children.

As set out above refugees resettling in Herefordshire are supported by the Council, but also by a range of voluntary, community and faith organisations. LAHF impacts positively on the lives of our Afghan families enabling them to resettle into secure affordable housing in the county. The development of a settled Afghan community in Herefordshire creates a more diverse population, enabling Herefordians to learn about new cultures and experiences whilst supporting our refugee community to integrate into everyday life.

#### 5. The impact of this activity

Consider the potential impact of this activity on each of the equality groups outlined below and explain your rationale. Please note it is possible for the potential impact to be both positive and negative within the same equality group. Remember to consider the impact on staff and service users (current and potential) and partner organisations. It may be useful to include data within these sections if you know the diversity make-up of the people likely to be affected.

Equality Group	Potential positive impact	Potential neutral impact	Potential negative impact	Rationale
<b>Age</b> (include safeguarding, consent and child welfare)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	People can access LAHF funded accommodation regardless of their age.
<b>Disability</b> (consider attitudinal, physical, financial and social barriers, neurodiversity, learning disability, physical and sensory impairment)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Research shows that secure housing improves health and wellbeing outcomes for children and families.  Resettlement experience in Herefordshire tells us that some families come to the county with existing disabilities that require ongoing

Equality Group	Potential positive impact	Potential neutral impact	Potential negative impact	Rationale
				<p>medical intervention and support. Families in settled accommodation are better able to develop relationships with healthcare professionals and ensure consistency in access to healthcare.</p> <p>Where a family needs specific adaptations to their property, the Council will work with them to understand what adaptations they need and apply for a disabled facilities grant to fund the adaptations.</p>
<b>Gender Reassignment</b> (include gender identity, and consider privacy of data and harassment)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	People can access LAHF funded accommodation regardless of their gender.
<b>Marriage &amp; Civil Partnerships</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	People can access LAHF funded accommodation regardless of their relationship status.
<b>Pregnancy &amp; Maternity</b> (consider working arrangements, part-time working, infant caring responsibilities)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Research shows that secure housing improves health and wellbeing outcomes for children and families.
<b>Race</b> (including Travelling Communities and people of other nationalities)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>LAHF properties are targeted at specific groups e.g. Afghan refugees resettling in the UK and people in need of temporary accommodation.</p> <p>It is anticipated that once the properties purchased by Registered Provider partners to support refugee resettlement are no longer needed for that specific purpose, they will become general needs housing stock, available to people living in Herefordshire through Home Points, regardless of their race.</p>
<b>Religion &amp; Belief</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	People can access LAHF funded accommodation regardless of their region or beliefs.
<b>Sex</b> (consider issues of safety, sexual violence, part-time work, and single-sex provision – especially in light of the legal definition of “sex”)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	People can access LAHF funded accommodation regardless of their sex.
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	People can access LAHF funded accommodation regardless of their sexual orientation.
<b>Others: carers, care leavers, homeless, social/ economic deprivation</b> (consider shift-patterns, caring responsibilities)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	When refugee families come to Herefordshire, they are usually dependant upon benefits whilst they look for work opportunities. Families are supported to budget and apply for emergency grants if needed e.g. replacement of white goods. Families are also supported to access any grants towards fuel costs.

Equality Group	Potential positive impact	Potential neutral impact	Potential negative impact	Rationale
				<p>Data tells us than an increasing number of care leavers are becoming homeless. The Council works hard to prevent this; there is a joint protocol between housing and children’s social care to ensure that care leavers are supported into suitable accommodation.</p> <p>The Council also have a joint protocol for the prevention of homelessness amongst young people aged 16 and 17; to ensure they are safe and accommodated.</p> <p>Whilst every effort is made to prevent homelessness amongst young people and care leavers, it does occur. The provision of good quality temporary accommodation in Herefordshire means that vulnerable young people and care leavers can remain close to their support networks, place of education and jobs.</p>
<p><b>Health Inequalities</b> (any preventable, unfair &amp; unjust differences in health status between groups, populations or individuals that arise from unequal distribution of social, environmental &amp; economic conditions)</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Research shows that secure housing improves health and wellbeing outcomes for children and families.</p> <p>Resettlement experience in Herefordshire tells us that some families come to the county with existing health conditions that require ongoing medical intervention and support. Families in settled accommodation are better able to develop relationships with healthcare professionals and ensure consistency in access to healthcare.</p>

Where a negative impact on any of the equality groups is realised after the implementation of the activity, the activity lead will seek to minimise the impact and carry out a full review of this EIA.

## 6. Action planning

What actions will you take as a result of this impact assessment? (you will need to include actions to mitigate any potential negative impacts)

Potential negative impact	What action will be taken	Who will lead	Timeframe
No negative impacts have been identified.			

## 7. Monitoring and review

How will you monitor these actions?

Housing Solutions collect and provide quarterly (HCLIC) data about homelessness to the Government.

The Council's Refugee Resettlement and Migration Support Team collect qualitative and quantitative data about refugee resettlement in Herefordshire through regular monitoring.

When will you review this EIA?

This EIA will be reviewed at the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> round of LAHF to ensure any learning is integrated into future rounds / housing related grant schemes.

## 8. Equality Statement

- All public bodies have a statutory duty under the Equality Act 2010 to give due regard to how they can improve society and promote equality in every aspect of their day-to-day business. This means that they must consider, and keep reviewing, how they are promoting equality in decision-making, policies, services, procurement, staff recruitment and management.
- Herefordshire Council will challenge discrimination, promote equality, respect human rights, and design and implement services, policies and measures that meet the diverse needs of our population, ensuring that none are placed at a disadvantage over others.

Signature of person completing EIA

Hannah McSherry

Date signed

05/05/2026