

Community and Equality Impact Assessment

As an authority we have made a commitment to apply a systematic screening process to both new policy development or changes to services.

This is to determine whether the proposals are likely to have a significant impact on different groups within our community.

This process has been developed, together with **full guidance** to support officers in meeting our duties under the:

- Equality Act 2010.
- The Best Value Guidance
- The Public Services (Social Value) 2012 Act

As well as supporting you to look at whether there is, or will be, a significant impact, the guidance will also consider ways in which you might mitigate this in the future.

About the service or policy development

Name of service or policy	My Place: Mobility scooters in communal areas fire safety policy
Lead Officer	Francesco La Torre, Principal Quality and Compliance Manager, My Place
Contact Details	Francesco.LaTorre@lbbd.gov.uk

Why is this service or policy development/review needed?

The new mobility scooters in shared communal areas policy is designed to ensure that residents living in Council buildings (all residents including tenants, leaseholders and tenants of leaseholders) with shared communal areas who wish to purchase or store a mobility scooter can do so safely. This is in order to ensure the Council discharges its duty to maintain buildings in full compliance with Fire Safety duties by preventing mobility scooters being charged or stored in communal areas.

To achieve this, the Council will work with every existing mobility scooter owner and those wishing to purchase a scooter to ensure their scooter meets their need and can be stored safely in their property or in a storage unit, not in a communal area where it poses a fire risk.

The policy outlines the criteria that the Council will use to establish whether a mobility scooter can be used and stored safely or not. To own and store a mobility scooter the Council must agree that the mobility scooter can be safely stored and charged in a resident's property or the buildings storage unit and that the resident has a professionally assessed need for a mobility scooter. The policy will apply to new purchases and existing mobility scooter owners.

Currently LBBD has no policy or guidance in place to effectively manage the safe use, storage and charging of Mobility Scooters in Residential Buildings. Some residents purchase mobility scooters without an Occupational Therapy Assessment or other professional Medical assessment on the need of a mobility scooter to their Health and Wellbeing and assessment on the resident's competency and mental health capacity to safely drive the scooter. This could expose themselves and others to significant risk, in relation to fire safety and injury to others or themselves.

The intention of this Policy is not to prevent residents purchasing a mobility scooter. This Policy is necessary to ensure that the Council can safely manage the use of mobility scooters within the council's residential buildings with shared communal living spaces and all risks associated with powered wheelchair and mobility scooters. This Policy is also necessary to provide guidance and advice to residents who currently own a scooter and to those who wish to purchase or lease a mobility scooter. It is essential that we raise awareness on the safe use of the scooters and risks relating to the use, storage and charging of the scooters as well as their potential liability for any injuries caused to other people and buildings as a result of their mobility scooter usage.

1. Community impact (this can be used to assess impact on staff although a cumulative impact should be considered).

What impacts will this service or policy development have on communities?
 Look at what you know? What does your research tell you?

Consider:

- National and local data sets
- Complaints
- Consultation and service monitoring information
- Voluntary and Community Organisations
- The Equality Act places a specific duty on people with ‘protected characteristics’. The table below details these groups and helps you to consider the impact on these groups.

There are several risks and residents’ liability associated with mobility scooters ranging from fire and safety risks to scooters owner’s liability for injuries caused to others. Nationally there have been several serious fire incidents caused by mobility scooters that led to a loss of life and loss of property. Fire can destroy lives, buildings and business. Residents safety in their homes is a primary aim of the Council.

By ensuring the safe use, storage, and charging of mobility scooters to mitigate fire risk and prevent the blockage of fire escape routes the Council is supporting Council tenants, leaseholders, and tenants of leaseholders.

This policy will impact age and disability most significantly. Barking & Dagenham has an ageing population with 20,924 people over 65.2. Of these, 8,068 are aged between 75-89, and 1,075 are aged 90+. Where people are living longer, we can expect this section of the population (and their care and support needs) to grow. There are also more people living with disabilities or long-term health conditions. According to the Census 2011, 26.9% of all households in the borough have a person with a long-term health condition or disability.

Within these groups, we know the changes will impact at least 77 residents, which is the number who currently use at mobility scooter or powered wheelchair. This consists of:

Extra Care and Sheltered accommodation: Out of 700 flats, 16 residents use a powered wheelchair, 71 use class mobility scooters.

General needs: Out of 11,000 flat, 1 resident uses a powered wheelchair and 8 use mobility scooters.

Based on the demographic trends described above, we can expect the number of residents seeking to use mobility scooters to increase over the coming years, and therefore it is important to adopt this policy moving forward.

The below outlines the impact on each protected characteristic in detail.

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Potential impacts	Positive	Neutral	Negative	What are the positive and negative impacts?	How will benefits be enhanced and negative impacts minimised or eliminated?
<p>Local communities in general</p>	<p>X</p>			<p>Additional fire safety protection for Council tenants, leaseholders and tenants of leaseholders.</p> <p>This Policy will also provide residents that currently are storing and charging their Powered Wheelchairs and scoters inside their flats or in their Bungalows/single duelling, help and support and professional advice on the safe storage and charging the powered wheelchairs and scooters inside their own property.</p> <p>Residents that live in the buildings that don't use a mobility scooter or a powered wheelchair, will also benefit by a safer shared communal spaces environment. This</p>	<p>My Place has an comprehensive implementation plan to ensure this policy is adhered to and that all mobility scooters can be charged safely.</p>

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			<p>will also help to reduce potential tension between residents that use the mobility aid and other residents.</p>	
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			<p>Residents that are currently storing and charging mobility scooters and powered wheelchair in the communal areas of the buildings, also use the landlord electric supply, that is recharged to all residents in the building. This has a negative financial impact on the residents that live in the building and don't use a mobility scooter or powered wheelchair and they pay for but don't benefit from the use of the extra electrical power required to charge the scooter and powered wheelchair.</p>	
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			<p>To mitigate the negative financial impact on those residents, this Policy will ensure that the electric power used to charge the mobility scooters or powered</p>	
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			wheelchairs is recharged only to residents that use and benefit from the use of the scooters or powered wheelchair.	
Age	X		X	<p>The overall impact of this Policy on this protected characteristic will be positive as it will protect all residents from the risk of fires and from the risk of liability for any damage or injuries caused to other by the use of the scooters.</p> <p>The Policy will have a low negative impact on residents that are currently using mobility scooters protected by the Age and Disability characteristics of the Equality Act, because there may be cases of residents who will no longer be able to store their scooter where they do currently if the Council assesses the storage location as representing a fire risk to building residents.</p> <p>To mitigate this adverse negative we are making a significant investment in the storage capacity of Council owned buildings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 48 mobility scooters storage and charging units have been built across all extra care sheltered accommodation buildings. • 2 mobility scooters storage and charging units have been built in two low rise blocks. • 1 adaption to security door entrance to block of flats has been carried out to facilitate the automatic opening the door and easy access for a powered wheelchair user. • 11 new storage and charging mobility scooter units have been completed in 2019 and 7 more units completed by the end of June 2020 in sheltered accommodation buildings. • Within the 2020/21 capital programme, the Council has invested a further capital budget to build mobility scooter storage facilities in another 5 sheltered accommodation sites. • The council is carrying out an audit of all storage areas on the ground floor of the block of flats to explore the option to convert it into bikes, pram and mobility scooter storage facilities.

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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should there be a need to evacuate the building, we want to ensure that all our residents can leave the building safely in the event of a fire or other emergency (We understand that many disabled and vulnerable people will be able to leave the building without help; however, some people may need assistance. We are writing to all resident that live in a block of flats to ask whether they need a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) to make sure that they can leave the building safely in the event of an emergency. • The Council is investing £3.5m per year to replace all fire doors to flats front doors and the communal areas of the blocks, the design of the new doors will create a horizontal fire safety refuge zones on each floor of the high-rise block to support wheelchair users or residents with a medical condition restricting their mobility. <p>We are mindful that notwithstanding this investment, it is possible that a resident will be unable to store their scooter in a safe place should this policy be adopted. If this adverse impact circumstance arises, we will seek to arrive at a mutually beneficial outcome which supports people and allows us to abide by our policy to ensure fire safety. The Council will judge these circumstances on a case by case basis.</p> <p>This will involve engaging with colleagues in Care and Support and Community Solutions to generate solutions tailored to an individual's specific circumstances with the possibility, in exceptional circumstances, of exempting certain</p>
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				<p>aspects of this policy at the dispensation of the Director of My Place, or a senior manager acting on their behalf.</p> <p>Six months from the implementation of the policy, and at regular intervals thereafter, officers will review this adverse impact and recommend amendments to the policy if necessary.</p> <p>An audit conducted in April 2020 by My Place and Care & Support provides accommodation specific mitigation detail:</p> <p>Mobility scooters in Extra Care</p> <p>This Policy will have a Positive impact on 11 out of 16 current scooter users. The mitigations for the other 5 current scooters users are set out below. However, the overall impact of this Policy on this protect characteristic will be positive. The Policy will protect all residents from the risk of fires and from the risk of liability for any damage or injuries caused to other by the use of the scooters.</p> <p>The audit carried out in April 2020 has identified 17 Scooters users in Extra Care, Sheltered and Low-rise buildings (1Class 2 and 15 Class 3). The audit also highlighted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 x scooters are currently stored inside the resident flats. • 3 x Scooters are safely stored inside Mobility scooter purpose-built storage and changing units build by the council. • 5 x scooters are stored inside the communal areas and protected fire escape routes of the buildings.
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					<p>To mitigate the impact on the 5 residents that currently are storing the scooters in the communal areas of the buildings, the council has built 13 new purpose-built scooter storage and charging units in the communal garden of the buildings, (3 are currently been used and there is a capacity to safely store a further 10 scooter).</p> <p>6 of the of the new available scooters storage units are on the same site where the 5 residents are storing their scooters inside the communal area of the building. This new facility will provide all the five residents with the facility to safely store their mobility scooter in new purpose-built storage units and mitigate any negative impact on the five residents.</p> <p>The Council will be working with the five residents that currently are storing their mobility scooters inside the communal area of the buildings, Adult Care and Support team and Community Solution team, to advise and assist them to store the scooters inside the purpose-built safe storage and charging units that the Council built on site</p> <p>Mobility scooters in part 2 Sheltered Accommodation</p> <p>This Policy will have a Positive impact on 9 out of 17 current scooter users. The mitigations for the other 8 current scooters users are set out below. However, the overall impact of this Policy on this protect characteristic will be positive. The Policy will protect all residents from the risk of fires and from the risk of liability for any damage or injuries caused to other by the use of the scooters.</p>
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				<p>The audit carried out in April 2020 has identified 17 Scooters users in Part 2 Sheltered buildings (8 Class 2 and 9 Class 3). The audit also highlighted that:</p>
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- 6 x scooters are currently stored inside the resident flats.
- 3 x Scooters are safely stored inside Mobility scooter purpose-built storage and changing units build by the council.
- 8 x scooters are stored inside the communal areas and protected fire escape routes of the buildings.

To mitigate the impact on the 8 residents that currently are storing the scooters in the communal areas of the buildings, the council has built 21 new purpose-built scooter storage and charging units in the communal garden of the buildings, (3 of the scooters are currently been stored inside the units and there is a capacity of 18 extra purpose -built storage units to safely store the remaining 8 scooters that are currently stored inside the communal area of the buildings).

12 of the new available scooters are on the same site where the 8 residents are storing their scooters inside the communal area of the building. This new facility will provide all the 8 residents with the facility to safely store their mobility scooter in the new purpose-built storage units and mitigate any negative impact on the five residents.

The Council will work with the 8 residents that currently are storing their mobility scooters inside the communal area of the buildings, Adult Disability Care and Support team and Community Solution Team, to assist the residents to store the scooters inside the purpose-built safe storage and charging units that the Council has built on site.

					<p>The Audit has also highlighted that 2 of the mobility scooters are permanently stored inside the purpose-built storage units and are not used by the residents. As part of this Policy, the Council will be working with the residents and Adult Disability Care and Support team to assess the needs of those two scooters, and if residents no longer need the mobility will help the resident to safely dispose the redundant scooters.</p> <p>Mobility scooters in part 1.5 Sheltered Accommodation</p> <p>This Policy will have a Positive impact on all 26 scooter users. The overall impact of this Policy on this protect characteristic will be positive. The Policy will protect all residents from the risk of fires and from the risk of liability for any damage or injuries caused to other by the use of the scooters.</p> <p>The audit carried out in April 2020 has identified 26 Scooters users in Part 1.5 Sheltered buildings (9 Class 2 and 17 Class 3). The audit also highlighted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 x scooters are currently stored inside the resident’s flats. • 16 x Scooters are safely stored inside Mobility scooter purpose-built storage and changing units build by the council. • 6 x scooters are stored in the open in the communal gardens. <p>The Audit has also confirmed that none of the scooter are stored inside the fire escape routes communal staircase.</p> <p>To mitigate the impact on the 6 residents that currently are storing the scooters in the open communal garden areas of the buildings, the council has</p>
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				<p>built 43 new purpose-built scooter storage and charging units in the communal garden of the buildings,(4 are currently been used and there is a capacity to safely store a further 39 scooters).</p> <p>The Council will be working with the 6 residents that currently are storing their mobility scooters outside communal garden areas of the buildings, Adult Disability Care and Support team and Community Solution Team, to assist the residents to store the scooters inside purpose-built safe storage and charging units that the Council has built on site.</p> <p>Mobility scooters in part 1 Sheltered Accommodation</p> <p>This Policy will have a Positive impact on all 26 scooter users. The overall impact of this Policy on this protected characteristic will be positive. The Policy will protect all residents from the risk of fires and from the risk of liability for any damage or injuries caused to other by the use of the scooters.</p> <p>The audit carried out in April 2020 has identified 12 Scooter users in Part 1 Sheltered buildings (6 Class 2 and 6 Class 3). The audit also highlighted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 x scooters are currently stored inside the resident’s flats. • 8 x scooters are stored in the open in the communal gardens. <p>The Audit has also confirmed that there are no purpose-built external storage and changing units on any of the sites.</p> <p>To mitigate the impact on the 12 residents that currently are storing the scooters in the open communal garden areas of the buildings, the Council will liaise with Adult Disability Care and</p>
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				<p>Support team to consider reasonable action on a case by case basis, including the option of building a mobility scooters storage units or exempting aspects of this policy in exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>Mobility scooters in general needs blocks of flats</p> <p>This Policy will have a medium negative Impact on the 8 scooter users living in flats. However, the overall impact of this Policy on this protect characteristic will be positive. The Policy will protect all residents from the risk of fires and from the risk of liability for any damage or injuries caused to other by the use of the scooters.</p> <p>The audit carried out in April 2020 has identified 8 Scooters users in block of flats buildings (7 Class 2 and 1 Class 3). The audit also highlighted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 x scooters are currently stored in the block protected fire escape routes. • 1 x scooters are stored in the open communal gardens. • 1x scooter store in a purpose-built storage and scooter storage and charging unit. <p>The Audit has also confirmed that there is only 1 purpose-built external storage and changing units on the sites.</p> <p>To mitigate the impact on the 6 residents that currently are storing the scooters in the protected fire escape routes of the buildings, the Council will liaise with residents, Adult Disability Care and Support team and Community Solutions to consider reasonable action on a case by case basis, including the option of safely storing the scooters</p>
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				<p>inside the flats and the option of building a mobility scooters storage units, or exempting aspects of this policy in exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>The Council is currently carrying out an audit of any empty storage spaces on the ground floor of the buildings that could potentially be converted into a safe storage and charging of mobility scooters.</p> <p>Powered Wheelchair User across all buildings</p> <p>This Policy will have a positive impact on all residents that use Powered Wheelchairs. The audit carried out in April 2020 has identified 17 powered wheelchair users in Extra Care, Sheltered and Low-rise buildings. All the wheelchairs are currently stored inside residents' flats. The policy will assist residents and offer guidance and support on how to safely continue to store and charge the Powered Wheelchairs inside the residents flat.</p>
<p>Disability</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>The Policy will have Low negative impact on some of the residents as highlighted that currently use a mobility scooter, as outlined above. The mitigations outlined above also apply to any resident with this protected characteristic.</p> <p>However, the overall impact of this Policy on this</p>	<p>Mitigation as the above section of age.</p>

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			protected characteristic will be positive as it will protect all residents from the risk of fires and provide residents professional safety advise on the appropriate use and maintenance to prevent any damage or injuries caused to others by the use of the scooters.	
Gender reassignment	X		<p>Based on the evidence, it is not anticipated that the policy will have a negative impact relating to this protected characteristic.</p> <p>The overall impact of this Policy on this protected characteristic will be positive as it will protect all residents from the risk of fires and from the risk of liability for any damage or injuries caused to other by the use of the scooters</p>	My Place will monitor the impact of the new policy on different groups to inform the policy and how resources are allocated, in consultation with civil society partners.
Marriage and civil partnership	X		Based on the evidence, it is not anticipated that the policy will have a negative impact relating to this protected characteristic.	My Place will monitor the impact of the new policy on different groups to inform the policy and how resources are allocated, in consultation with civil society partners.

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			<p>The overall impact of this Policy on this protected characteristic will be positive as it will protect all residents from the risk of fires and from the risk of liability for any damage or injuries caused to other by the use of the scooters.</p>	
Pregnancy and maternity	X		<p>Based on the evidence, it is not anticipated that the policy will have a negative impact relating to this protected characteristic.</p> <p>The overall impact of this Policy on this protected characteristic will be positive as it will protect all residents from the risk of fires and from the risk of liability for any damage or injuries caused to other by the use of the scooters.</p>	<p>My Place will monitor the impact of the new policy on different groups to inform the policy and how resources are allocated, in consultation with civil society partners.</p>
Race	X		<p>Based on the evidence, it is not anticipated that the policy will have a negative impact relating to this protected characteristic.</p> <p>The overall impact of this</p>	<p>My Place will monitor the impact of the new policy on different groups to inform the policy and how resources are allocated, in consultation with civil society partners, including those that represent different BME communities.</p>

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			Policy on this protected characteristic will be positive as it will protect all residents from the risk of fires and from the risk of liability for any damage or injuries caused to other by the use of the scooters	
Religion or belief	X		<p>Based on the evidence, it is not anticipated that the policy will have a negative impact relating to this protected characteristic.</p> <p>The overall impact of this Policy on this protected characteristic will be positive as it will protect all residents from the risk of fires and from the risk of liability for any damage or injuries caused to other by the use of the scooters.</p>	My Place will monitor the impact of the new policy on different groups to inform the policy and how resources are allocated, in consultation with civil society partners, including those that represent different faith communities.
Sex	X		<p>Based on the evidence, it is not anticipated that the policy will have a negative impact relating to this protected characteristic.</p> <p>45.10% of borough scooter users are women and 54.90% of</p>	My Place will monitor the impact of the new policy on different groups to inform the policy and how resources are allocated, working in consultation with civil society partners.

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			<p>the scooter users are Male.</p> <p>The overall impact of this Policy on this protected characteristic will be positive as it will protect all residents from the risk of fires and from the risk of liability for any damage or injuries caused to other by the use of the scooters</p>	
Sexual orientation	X		<p>Based on the evidence, it is not anticipated that the policy will have a negative impact relating to this protected characteristic.</p> <p>The overall impact of this Policy on this protect characteristic will be positive as it will protect all residents from the risk of fires and from the risk of liability for any damage or injuries caused to other by the use of the scooters.</p>	My Place will monitor the impact of the new policy on different groups to inform the policy and how resources are allocated/
Any community issues identified for this location?			The policy applies to the council's overall policy approach and seeks to secure resources across the borough	

2. Consultation.

Provide details of what steps you have taken or plan to take to consult the whole community or specific groups affected by the service or policy development e.g. on-line consultation, focus groups, consultation with representative groups?

The proposals set out in this report have been consulted with:

- My Place DMT
- LBBD Assurance Board
- Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Social Housing
- Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health Integration
- Barking and Dagenham Forums
- London Fire Brigade (LFB)
- London Councils Directors Fire Safety Group
- LBBD Finance, Legal and Procurement
- Corporate Strategic Group (CSG)

My Place is committed to working every owner and prospective owner of a mobility scooter and powered wheelchair to ensure they can use, store and charge their scooter safely.

3. Monitoring and Review

<p>How will you review community and equality impact once the service or policy has been implemented? <i>These actions should be developed using the information gathered in Section 1 and 2 and should be picked up in your departmental/service business plans.</i></p>		
Action	By when?	By who?
Review the low negative impact of age and disability every six months	December 2020	Francesco La Torre,
Review the impact of the policy – including the benefits to the overall community and particular disadvantaged groups – with a view to improving the approach on an ongoing basis.	June 2021	Francesco La Torre,

4. Next steps

It is important the information gathered is used to inform any Council reports that are presented to Cabinet or appropriate committees. This will allow Members to be furnished with all the facts in relation to the impact their decisions will have on different equality groups and the community as a whole.


Take some time to précis your findings below. This can then be added to your report template for sign off by the Strategy Team at the consultation stage of the report cycle.

<p>Implications/ Customer Impact</p> <p>This policy is vital to ensure the Council discharges its duty to maintain buildings in full compliance with Fire Safety duties by preventing mobility scooters being charged or stored in communal areas.</p> <p>The impact of the policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis, including how many scooters are stored in the new chagrining units and regular inspection of communal areas.</p>
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5. Sign off

The information contained in this template should be authorised by the relevant project sponsor or Divisional Director who will be responsible for the accuracy of the information now provided and delivery of actions detailed.

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Name	Role (e.g. project sponsor, head of service)	Date
Tania Peart 	Head of Service – My Place (Contracts, compliance and quality)	26/05/2020