

EIA001094 Devolved Retrofit Pilot Programme - business case

About your EIA

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| Reference Number: | EIA001094 |
| Subject of EIA: | Devolved Retrofit Pilot Programme - business case |
| Description: | <p>This grant funding scheme will fund thermal insulation, low carbon heating and renewable energy for homes and public sector buildings in Birmingham from 2025 to 2028. This work is a continuation of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Scheme, the Local Authority Delivery Scheme and the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme, but is now within the Integrated Settlement from the WMCA. The works will be focused in areas of the city with the most need in terms of thermal inefficiency and fuel poverty. They have been selected because the housing generally has low Energy Performance Certificate ratings (D and below), have high indices of multiple deprivation and/or align with other energy efficiency activities, eg Local Net Zero Neighbourhood in Castle Vale, community driven energy and retrofit projects eg Balsall Heath, Witton Lodge The wards are: Acocks Green Alum Rock Aston Balsall Heath West Birchfield Bordesley & Highgate Bordesley Green Castle Vale Glebe Farm & Tile Cross Gravelly Hill Handsworth Heartlands Kingstanding Ladywood Lozells Newtown Sparkbrook & Balsall Heath East Tyseley & Hay Mills Ward End The Warm Homes Social programme will also cover areas where City Housing are carrying out decency works (reroofing and solar, urgent and specific needs, windows and heating upgrades). These works are planned for homes in Edgbaston, Erdington, Hall Green, Hodge Hill, Ladywood, Northfield, Pery Barr, Selly Oak, Sutton, Yardley. For example, there are plans to include solar photo voltaic panels as part of reroofing works on homes in Falcon Lodge, Sutton. The programme will impact on approximately 4,000 BCC owned homes and 600 privately owned homes and about 18 public sector buildings.</p> |
| In support of: | ["Amended function"] |
| Reviewing Frequency: | Annually |
| First review date: | 30/06/2026 |

Directorate, Division & Service Area

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| Directorates: | ["Place, Prosperity and Sustainability"] |
| Division: | Route to Net Zero |
| Service Area: | Route to Net Zero |

Budget Savings

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| Related to budget savings?: | |
| Budget proposal reference number: | |

Officers

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| Responsible Officer Email: | tonia.clark@birmingham.gov.uk |
| Accountable Officer Email: | ellie.horwitch-smith@birmingham.gov.uk |

Data Sources

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| Data sources: | <p> https://www.beatcold.org.uk/how-fuel-poverty-affects-the-elderly/ https://www.scope.org.uk/campaigns/extra-costs/out-in-the-cold Census 2021 https://www.greaterbirminghamchambers.com/resource/birmingham-charity-leads-way-by-introducing-menopause-policy.html Birmingham_Women_s_Health_Needs_Report__April_2024__AF.pdf Trans_community_health_profile_accessible_AF.pdf https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2023/jan/15/poverty-in-uk-could-increase-death-rates-during-or-after-pregnancy-warns-who https://www.runnymedetrust.org/publications/falling-faster-amidst-a-cost-of-living-crisis-poverty-inequality-and-ethnicity-in-the-uk https://www.crimeandjustice.org.uk/publications/cjm/article/anti-poverty-strategies-care-leavers-same-prisoners https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/50265/supporting_healthier_communities/2437/lesbian_gay_bisexual_and_trans_lgbt_communities/2 </p> |
| Data sources Detail: | <p> Fuel poverty information from City Observatory - https://www.cityobservatory.birmingham.gov.uk/explore/dataset/percentage-households-in-fuel-poverty-birmingham-wards/insight/?disjunctive.arealabel&disjunctive.areaidentifier Economic Place Strategy - Integrated Settlement Cabinet Report https://birmingham.cmis.uk.com/birmingham/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/14645/Committee/2/Default.aspx Housing Strategy - https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/housingstrategy </p> |

Initial Assessment

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| Impact Age: | Maybe |
| Impact Disability: | Yes |
| Impact Sex: | No |
| Impact Gender Reassignment: | No |
| Impact Marriage and Civil Partnerships: | No |
| Impact Pregnancy and Maternity: | Yes |
| Impact Race: | Yes |
| Impact Religion or Beliefs: | Maybe |

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| Impact Sexual Orientation: | No |
| Impact Care Experience: | |

Initial Assessment Summary

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| Initial Assessment Summary: | Retrofitted homes will be more comfortable to live in and cost less to heat and studies have shown health benefits for people with COPD, asthma and other respiratory conditions. This should lead to a positive impact for people with disabilities with these conditions. Other vulnerable groups eg older people, pregnant people will also benefit because of these positive health impacts. Many of the areas being targeted for domestic retrofit are areas with a high proportion of people who are discriminated against due to their race, ethnicity or religion. Improving living conditions in these areas will have a positive impact on these residents. We will be undertaking community involvement in household engagement to help avoid barriers to access due to language or cultural differences. The initial assessment showed a strong indication that there would be no negative impacts on people. We have identified no significant concerns. |
| Is a full EIA Required?: | Yes |

Protected Characteristic – Age

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| Impact Age: | |
| Age Group Impacted: | Older people (55+) will be positively impacted by this programme |
| Age Impact Details: | Older people will benefit from warmer, more comfortable homes in two ways: Physical health: Older people have reduced muscle mass and poorer circulation meaning that their bodies are not able to physiologically able to keep them warm during the cold periods. This affects their immune systems, amplifies pre-existing conditions and can have dire consequences on their mental health. There is a very strong relationship between cold homes and cardiovascular and respiratory disease. These are disease which are mostly avoidable for those in cold homes and require long term treatment and immense cost to the NHS, therefore affecting every user of the NHS. Mental Health: Mental health of the elderly has been shown to be affected by living in a cold home. Research from the Marmot review shows a large increase in mental health issues, largely attributed to poorer well-being due to the cold. Cold homes can reduce dexterity with the elderly, which may already be compromised due to age or existing conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis, leading to frustration and despair. Simple tasks like making a cup of tea or preparing food may become extremely difficult and further reduce the quality of their physical and mental health. This information is taken from: https://www.beatcold.org.uk/how-fuel-poverty-affects-the-elderly/ Most of the wards selected by this project have low numbers of older people, but Castle Vale and Kingstanding have higher percentages of older people and so they will particularly benefit from retrofit work to their homes. The wards and their percentage of the population of 55 years. Acocks Green 23.1 Alum Rock 13.5 Aston 15.8 Balsall Heath West 19.0 Birchfield 18.3 Bordesley & Highgate 11.0 Bordesley Green 14.1 Castle Vale 28.8 Glebe Farm & Tile Cross 21.3 Gravelly Hill 22.9 Handsworth 18.8 Heartlands 14.8 Kingstanding 25.8 Ladywood 23.2 Lozells 14.0 Newtown 10.4 Sparkbrook & Balsall Heath East 15.1 Tyseley & Hay Mills 18.5 Ward End 13.7 |
| Age Impact Mitigation: | The impact will be positive in wards with higher numbers of older people eg Castle Vale and Kingstanding. Many people in BCC owned homes will be older, although this project is not doing any work in the Extra Care facilities as these are new buildings with good levels of insulation already. |

Protected Characteristic – Disability

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| Impact Disability: | There will be a positive impact on people with disabilities |
| Disability Impact Details: | In Birmingham about 8.7% of the population classified themselves as Disabled under the equality Act in the 2021 Census. The wards that we have selected have an average percentage of 8.28, just under the Birmingham average, but 6 of the wards have much higher percentages. Castle Vale has 12.91% people with disabilities and this is our chosen area for the Local Net Zero Accelerator. The wards that we're working in and the % of people with disabilities. Census 2021 Acocks Green 9.45 Alum Rock 6.94 Aston 7.03 Balsall Heath West 9.12 Birchfield 8.17 Bordesley & Highgate 6.66 Bordesley Green 7.54 Castle Vale 12.91 Glebe Farm & Tile Cross 9.81 Gravelly Hill 10.81 Handsworth 7.52 Heartlands 8.03 Kingstanding 10.66 Ladywood 6.27 Lozells 7.03 Newtown 6.4 Sparkbrook & Balsall Heath East 8.23 Tyseley & Hay Mills 8.17 Ward End 6.58 ward average 8.28 Scope produced a report which showed how people with disabilities were disproportionately impacted by energy costs: https://www.scope.org.uk/campaigns/extra-costs/out-in-the-cold Over a third of disabled adults say that their impairment or condition has a significant effect on their energy costs Over half (55%) of disabled adults have worried about paying their energy bills 4.1 million households with a disabled person spend over £1,500 a year on energy. Of these, 790,000 spend over £2,500 a year on energy. The average UK household spends around £1,200 a year More than 900,000 households with a disabled person in England are living in fuel poverty (defined as having higher than average fuel costs which would push them below the poverty line). |
| Disability Impact Mitigation: | retrofitting a home is disruptive for the tenant and extra care needs to be taken with homes when people with disabilities live there, especially if there are medical devices that need electricity 24/7. Back up batteries are used when the electricity supply needs to be turned off for the installation of solar panels. we work with Housing Officers and tenant engagement workers to make sure that people with learning difficulties and mental health problems are able to manage the disruption. This can mean re-homing tenants for a short time. |

Protected Characteristic – Sex

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| Impact Sex: | Any menopausal women in the homes will be positively impacted |
| Sex Groups Impacted: | Women |
| Sex Impact Details: | Homes that have ventilation are more comfortable to live in and this might improve the environment for menopausal women as they be sensitive to temperature. Hot flushes and night sweats can lead to women feeling hotter. A well ventilated home can help to address this. Approximately 210,000 women are over 45 in Birmingham and about 63% have said that menopause symptoms affect their work. It could be assumed that these symptoms will affect their home life too. https://www.greaterbirminghamchambers.com/resource/birmingham-charity-leads-way-by-introducing-menopause-policy.html Birmingham_Women_s_Health_Needs_Report__April_2024__AF.pdf |
| Sex Impact Mitigation: | Most of the homes are in wards with younger populations, but there will be some menopausal women in homes being retrofitted. The improved ventilation should help with symptoms. |

Protected Characteristic – Gender Reassignment

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| Impact Gender Reassignment: | Possible impact |
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| Gender Reassignment Impact Details: | 0.85% of Birmingham's population (7,826 people) identified their gender identity as different from their sex registered at birth (Census 2021). Some of these people may be living in BCC owned homes. There is limited data but the Trans_community_health_profile_accessible_AF.pdf report indicates that there may be more unemployment in this community and more homelessness. |
| Gender Reassignment Impact Mitigation: | Residents need to be treated with respect and dignity by contractors entering their homes. Complaints will be dealt with seriously. |

Protected Characteristic – Marriage and Civil Partnership

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| Impact Marriage and Civil Partnership: | |
| Marriage and Civil Partnership Groups Impacted: | no impact |
| Marriage and Civil Partnership Impact Details: | |
| Marriage and Civil Partnership Impact Mitigation: | |

Protected Characteristic – Pregnancy and Maternity

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| Impact Pregnancy and Maternity: | positive impact |
| Pregnancy and Maternity Impact Details: | For some families, a new baby pushes them into fuel poverty as one parent stops working or from the costs related to the new baby. The Maternal Mental Health Alliance survey showed that 72% of new mothers said cost of living concerns had negatively affected their mental health. https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2023/jan/15/poverty-in-uk-could-increase-death-rates-during-or-after-pregnancy-warns-who From a health perspective, it is important to maintain a warm home for a baby's health and well-being. By making homes cheaper to heat this programme will positively impact on the well being of pregnant people and people with new babies. |
| Pregnancy and Maternity Impact Mitigation: | retrofit works can be disruptive and contractors will need to be considerate if the residents are pregnant or have babies in the home. |

Protected Characteristic – Ethnicity and Race

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| Impact Ethnicity and Race: | positive impact |
| Ethnicity and Race Groups Impacted: | all |

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| Ethnicity and Race Impact Details: | <p>Only two of the wards in which we are planning to work have percentages of White British people over 50% - Castle Vale and Kingstanding. The others have Global majority citizens as the majority percentage. The wards we are working in with the % population who describe as White British and the % Global Majority (this does include White Roma, White European, White Ukrainian etc) Census 2021 Acocks Green ,41.99, 58.01 Alum Rock ,4.22, 95.78 Aston ,4.55, 95.45 Balsall Heath West ,12.45, 87.55 Birchfield ,6.49, 93.51 Bordesley & Highgate ,13.59, 86.41 Bordesley Green ,6.22, 93.78 Castle Vale ,75.66, 24.34 Glebe Farm & Tile Cross ,47.16, 52.84 Gravelly Hill ,33.51, 66.49 Handsworth ,5.06, 94.94 Heartlands ,10.21, 89.79 Kingstanding ,64.17, 35.83 Ladywood ,26.76, 73.24 Lozells ,3.72, 96.28 Newtown ,13.38, 86.62 Sparkbrook & Balsall Heath East ,6.74, 93.26 Tyseley & Hay Mills ,29.84, 70.16 Ward End ,10.68, 89.32</p> <p>Improving the energy efficiency of homes will reduce energy costs for tenants and homeowners. As the majority of the people in these wards are from ethnic groups that are minorities from a UK perspective, they will be more likely to receive thermal improvements to their homes which will help with affording fuel costs which is important as they are disproportionately more likely to be in poverty than White British people. See information from the Runnymede Trust. https://www.runnymedetrust.org/publications/falling-faster-amidst-a-cost-of-living-crisis-poverty-inequality-and-ethnicity-in-the-uk Their report says that “Black and minority ethnic people are currently 2.2 times more likely to be in deep poverty than white people, with Bangladeshi people more than three times more likely”. They also discuss how changes to benefits, the energy crisis and structural, systemic racism have left many Black and minority ethnic households disproportionately exposed to the cost-of-living crisis. They have also estimated the impacts of the energy price guarantee scheme from 2022, showing that just under a third (32%) of White people are likely to experience fuel poverty in winter compared to more than half (52%) of Black and minority ethnic people (rising to two thirds (66%) of Pakistani and Bangladeshi people).</p> |
| Ethnicity and Race Impact Mitigation: | Contractors need to be sensitive to cultural differences and plan works accordingly. They also may need to use interpreters for some households and ensure that appliance instructions are in appropriate languages. |

Protected Characteristic – Religion

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| Impact Religion: | Positive |
| Religion Groups Impacted: | all |
| Religion Impact Details: | Most of the wards have a majority Muslim population. The works will be the same in every home but scheduling the works may be different so as to avoid religious celebrations (Eid). |
| Religion Impact Mitigation: | The works will be the same in every home but scheduling the works may be different so as to avoid religious celebrations (Eid). |

Protected Characteristic – Sexual Orientation

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| Impact Sexual Orientation: | positive impact |
| Sexual Orientation Groups Impacted: | all |
| Sexual Orientation Impact Details: | About 5% of Birmingham's population are LGBTQ+ (City Council website) - 45,000 people and some of these people will live in BCC homes in the areas being targeted for this project. There is little data in terms of fuel poverty but for those LGBTQ+ people who are |

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| | unemployed they will be in fuel poverty and this programme will reduce their energy bills and help address this issue. |
| Sexual Orientation Impact Mitigation: | Residents need to be treated with respect and dignity by contractors entering their homes. Complaints will be dealt with seriously. |

Protected Characteristic – Care Experience

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| Impact Care Experience: | Positive impact |
| Care Experience Impact Details: | |
| Care Experience Impact Mitigation: | Contractors may need to spend extra time explaining how new technologies work (eg heat pumps). |

Other

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| Any other risks or impacts: | none |
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Full Assessment Summary

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| Full Assessment Summary: | The role of contractors in people's homes is important to ensure cultural and religious sensitivity and to be aware of the training needs of the residents in new technologies. Some people will need more time to understand how to use it or may need instructions in their home language. We are working with community groups and tenant engagement officers to engage residents and we need to make sure that they are aware of the range of support available from the contractors. Retrofit will positively impact on all groups as long as the disruption can be managed thoughtfully and the aftercare is well considered and appropriate. |
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Monitoring

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| Monitoring Details: | The schemes will be monitored monthly as part of the reporting process to the funder (WMCA) and part of this will include resident feedback. We will be using a platform called Shared Works which enables residents access to information about the retrofit works being carried out in their homes and which gives them the opportunity to feedback at all stages of the works. |
| Monitoring Officer Email: | daniel.gregory@birmingham.gov.uk |

