Appendix 4 - Equality Impact Assessments

Durham County Council – Altogether Better equality impact assessment form

NB: Equality impact assessment is a legal requirement for all strategies plans, functions, policies, procedures and services. We are also legally required to publish our assessments.

You can find help and prompts on completing the assessment in the guidance from page 7 onwards.

Section one: Description and initial screening

Section overview: this section provides an a	udit trail.
Service/team or section: ACE / Engagement and	d Third Sector
Lead Officer: Gordon Elliott	Start date: 10 th March 2011 Updated 14.9.2011 Updated 18.1.2012
Subject of the Impact Assessment: (please appropriate):	also include a brief description of the aims, outcomes, operational issues as

The review of community buildings in County Durham

- The aim is to put in place an affordable strategy that will ensure there is a network of sustainable community buildings that are managed and controlled by local communities, that meet local needs and aspirations and contribute to the viability of local communities
- To collate all relevant data on all buildings, including repair costs, revenue costs, usage (time and groups), ownership (leases), market value and information on governance and management.
- To review the process of allocating grant aid to community associations

• To develop a proposal of options for asset transfer of community buildings

Option 1. Maintain the 'status quo' of ad-hoc unplanned investment

Option 2. Withdraw from provision of providing community buildings

Option 3. Fully invest in all Council community buildings

Option 4. Fulfil minimum contractual requirements set out in lease arrangements

Option 5. Target investment on priority community buildings on the condition of asset transfer.

Option 6. Partially invest in all properties on the condition of asset transfer.

- To make recommendations on investment and in a network of sustainable community buildings that are managed and controlled by local people, meet local needs and aspirations and contribute to the vitality of local communities.
- To make recommendations for the possible closures of some community buildings subject to extensive consultation

Who are the main stakeholders: General public / Employees / Elected Members / Partners/ Specific audiences/Other (please specify): Stake holders would include,

- Users of community buildings who are potentially all members of local communities, including those with protected characteristics.
- The wider community who are potential users
- Volunteers who give their time to sit on voluntary management committees and organise activities
- Staff who are employed to work at community buildings
- County Council Members
- Town and Parish Councils
- Other services (voluntary sector and public sector) who use community buildings for service delivery.

Is a copy of the subject attached? Yes

If not, where could it be viewed? Cabinet Report

Initial screening

Prompts to help you:

Who is affected by it? Who is intended to benefit and how? Could there be a different impact or outcome for some groups? Is it likely to affect relations between different communities or groups, for example if it is thought to favour one particular group or deny opportunities for others? Is there any specific targeted action to promote equality?

Is there an actual/potential negative or positive impact on specific groups within these headings? Indicate :Y = Yes, N = No, ?=Unsure

Gender	Y	Disability	Y	Age	Y	Race/ethnicity	Ν	Religion	Ν	Sexual	Ν
								or belief		orientation	

How will this support our commitment to promote equality and meet our legal responsibilities?

Reminder of our legal duties:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination & harassment
- Promoting equality of opportunity
- Promoting good relations between people from different groups
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people and taking account of someone's disability, even where that involves treating them more favourably than other people
- o Involving people, particularly disabled people, in public life and decision making

The impact assessment of the proposals aims to eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote equality, there are particular considerations relating to each proposal. The initial screening has identified the following potential impacts.

Proposals to close some community buildings are likely to have the greatest potential negative impact on:

• Gender: As community buildings often provide activities that are accessed more by women the impact will be greater.

- Disability: There are issues in relation to accessibility of buildings also some specific activities for disabled people that may be affected and potentially have limited access to alternative means of transport. Investment has already been made in a number of community buildings to improve access for disabled people and a number of the proposed options would build on this with extra investment.
- Age: As community buildings often provide activities that are accessed more by younger and older people the impact will be greater.
- Religion or belief: A small number of faith/belief groups do use community buildings for meetings and therefore could be affected by proposals.
- Race and Sexual orientation: There is no specific evidence of impact at this stage but any consultation will include these protected characteristics in order to identify impacts.

Proposed changes to grant aid will provide opportunities for community buildings to invest in services, facilities and activities that will meet the needs of the whole community but could specifically be used on improved access, better training and awareness for volunteers and staff and for developing specific services. This could support good relations between different groups and encourage involvement of disabled people.

Proposals for asset transfer would put assets in the hands of communities giving them greater opportunities to innovate and provide better services for the whole community. This could support good relations between different groups by strengthening participation in local communities. There are, however some groups who may feel less able or confident to participate in the asset transfer process, this will need to be considered if the strategy is approved.

The final report of the proposals takes into account the legal equality duties and factors such as deprivation levels and other local facilities as well as considering value for money. The proposed criteria for the allocation of resources contained in the review specifically takes into account levels of deprivation in an area.

What evidence do you have to support your findings?

See Section 2 for evidence, this has been reviewed during development of proposals and options including the results of consultation.

Update 18.1.12: -

A separate impact assessment was completed for the consultation process.

Section two of this equality impact assessment has been updated and is provided in two parts. Part A includes the equality impacts of the options considered. This was begun in March 2011 and reviewed in September 2011. Part B includes the evidence from the consultation and from information about the activities provided in community buildings.

Decision: Proceed to full impact assessment – Yes Date: 14.09.11

If you have answered 'No' you need to pass the completed form for approval & sign off.

Section two: Identifying impacts and evidence- Equality and Diversity

Section overview: this section identifies whether there are any impacts on equality/diversity/cohesion, what evidence is available to support the conclusion and what further action is needed.

Please note: Section two of this equality impact assessment is provided in two parts. Part A includes the equality impacts of the options considered. This was begun in March 2011 and reviewed in September 2011. Part B includes the evidence from the consultation and from information about the activities provided in community buildings. This information has been gathered from interviews with management committees, users (and for closed facilities relevant residents' groups and town and parish councils) to determine potential impact of change on community groups with protected characteristics. This was updated in January 2012.

Section two – I	Part A – Equality impacts of the options		
	Identify the impact: does this increase differences or does it aim to reduce gaps for particular groups?	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,	
Gender	Option 1 Although there would be no planned closures there would still be a high possibility that some	Option 1 As per Option 5.	Consultation will include consideration of equality issues and

unplanned closures would take place possibly having an increased negative impact as p Option 5. Option 2 Definite closure of a large number of buildings would greatly increase the negative		protected characteristics. Further monitoring data will be gathered for more detailed assessments.
impact. Option 3 A massive investment in the building would obviously have positive impact thus reducing gaps. However in order to fun this other council work may ha to be cut which could potential have a negative impact. Option 4 Definite closure of a large number of buildings would greatly increase the negative impact. There would be a positive impact where investmedoes take place but as per Option 3, these would have to funded by reductions to other budgets.	 that positively impact on 'gender'. However in order to commit to this investment, other budget areas would have to be reduced. Although we cannot say what these service areas would be, they could have an impact. Option 4 As per Option 3 where investment is to take place and option 5 where it is not. 	
Option 5 Potential closure of some community buildings would	Option 5 Many of the activities on offer in community buildings tend to attract more women than	

impact on women disproportionately as women tend to be more involved in both the activities on offer and on voluntary management committees. Option 6 Although there could be some investment there could be some investment there could still be unplanned closure of some community buildings that would impact on women	 men. (EG. Exercise classes, parent and toddler, bingo, dance classes). There may be specific sessions in some buildings relating to pregnancy/maternity (e.g. parent craft, baby & toddler groups) – the Equality Act includes protection for pregnant women and new mothers. Generally, women are less likely to have access to private transport and are more likely to use local services including those which are easy to reach and low cost. There are more older women than older men in the general population, they are also more likely to use local services for a number of reasons including limited access to transport, low income, socialising or personal safety concerns. There is no evidence at this stage to indicate a particular impact on transgender people but this will be considered as proposals develop. Detailed data on gender/transgender and split of users is not currently available Option 6 As per Option 5 	
--	---	--

voluntary management committees.

Age	Option 1	Option 1	Consultation will
	Although there would be no	As per Option 5.	include consideration
	planned closures there would still		of equality issues and
	be a high possibility that some		protected
	unplanned closures would take		characteristics.
	place possibly having an		
	increased negative impact as per		Further monitoring
	Priority 5.		data will be gathered
	Option 2	Option 2	for more detailed
	Definite closure of a large	As per Option 5.	assessments.
	number of buildings would		
	greatly increase the negative		
	impact.		
	Option 3	Option 3	
	A massive investment in the	An investment in the service would allow	
	building would obviously have a	community buildings to develop their services	
	positive impact thus reducing	that positively impact on 'Age'. However in	
	gaps. However in order to fund	order to commit to this investment, other	
	this other council work may have	budget areas would have to be reduced.	
	to be cut which could potentially	Although we cannot say what these service	
	have a negative impact.	areas would be, they could have an impact.	
	Option 4	Option 4	

Definite closure of a large number of buildings would greatly increase the negative impact. There would be a positive impact where investment does take place but as per Option 3, these would have to be funded by reductions to other budgets. Option 5 Potential closure of some community buildings would impact on young people and older people disproportionately as they tend to be more involved in both the activities on offer and on voluntary management committees (many are older people).	As per Option 3 where investment is to take place and option 5 where it is not. Option 5 Many of the activities on offer in community buildings tend to attract/target certain age groups, particularly younger and older people. (EG. Bingo, youth clubs, lunch clubs). Older and younger people are less likely to have access to private transport so they are more likely to use local services including those which are easy to reach and low cost. Other considerations include low income, opportunities for socialising or personal safety concerns. (See also note above on older women) Detailed data on age and split of users is not currently available Option 6	
There would be a high possibility	As per Option 5	

	of unplanned closures which would impact on young people and older people disproportionately as they tend to be more involved in both the activities on offer and on voluntary management committees (older people).		
Disability	Option 1 Although there would be no planned closures there would still be a high possibility that some unplanned closures would take place possibly having an increased negative impact as per Option 5. Option 2 Definite closure of a large	Option 1 As per Option 5. Option 2 As per Option 5.	Consultation will include consideration of equality issues and protected characteristics. Further monitoring data will be gathered for more detailed assessments.
	number of buildings would greatly increase the negative impact. Option 3 A massive investment in the building would obviously have a positive impact thus reducing gaps. However in order to fund this other council work may have to be cut which could potentially have a negative impact.	Option 3 An investment in the service would allow community buildings to develop their services that positively impact on 'disability'. However in order to commit to this investment, other budget areas would have to be reduced. Although we cannot say what these service areas would be, they could have an impact.	

Option 4 Definite closure of a large number of buildings would greatly increase the negative impact. There would be a positive impact where investment does take place but as per Option 3, these would have to be funded by reductions to other budgets.	Option 4 As per Option 3 where investment is to take place and option 5 where it is not.	
Option 5 The proposal to close some community buildings has potential negative impacts for some disabled people whilst the proposals for investment or grant aid could have positive impacts on access for disabled people.	• •	
	Investment has already been made in a number of community buildings to improve access for disabled people. The review will mean potential further investment in access for a good number of buildings. Changes to grant aid may provide an opportunity to improve access for disabled people.	

	Option 6 There would be a high possibility of unplanned closures with potential negative impacts for some disabled people. The proposals for investment or grant aid could have positive impacts on access for disabled people.	Detailed data on disability and split of users is not currently available Option 6 As per Option 5	
Race/Ethnicity	All options No evidence of specific impact at this stage	All options No evidence at this stage to say that this characteristic will be disproportionately affected but there will be impacts as part of the wider community. This will be reviewed as the process develops. Detailed data on ethnicity and split of users is not currently available	of equality issues and protected characteristics. Further monitoring data will be gathered
Religion or belief	Options 1,2,4,5 & 6 Potential impact in relation to groups using community buildings.	Options 1,2,4,5 & 6 In a few cases faith/belief groups do use	Consultation will include consideration of equality issues and protected characteristics.

Sexual orientation	All options	All options	Consultation will
	No evidence of specific impact at	No evidence at this stage to say that this	include consideration
	this stage	characteristic will be disproportionately	of equality issues and
		affected but there will be impacts as part of the	protected
		wider community. This will be reviewed as the	characteristics.
		process develops.	Further monitoring
			data will be gathered
		Detailed data on sexual orientation and split of	for more detailed
		users is not currently available	assessments.

	Section two – Part B – Equality impacts identified from the consultation and from information on activities provided in community buildings		
	Identify the impact: does this increase differences or does it aim to reduce gaps for particular groups?	evidence and consultation you have	What further action is required? (Include in Sect. 3 action plan)
Gender	The impact of a community building closure would reduce or limit access to local activities available for all but there is evidence that women may be affected more than men. Maintaining access to community buildings would potentially provide positive impacts through continuing activities and opportunities for new activity. New activity could include family activities which are equally accessible for men.	A number of activities which were mostly used by women were identified during consultation. These activities were mainly around childcare, toddler groups and baby clinics. One of the buildings listed is used by a women's group. There are also links with age as there are more older women in the population than men. For many women, particularly older women, availability of local activities is important for a number of reasons including limited access to private transport, fitting activities in around care responsibilities, social opportunities and venues which are seen as 'safe'. Citizen's Panel consultation responses suggested that more women use community buildings. Female respondents thought exercise classes would increase use whilst male respondents thought sports clubs would do this.	General actions: Ensure that individual asset transfer process includes targeted support for those who may have limited experience of business planning or management processes. Ensure asset transfer process includes information on Equality Act responsibilities. Gender actions: Encourage those taking on responsibility for

	future. Some women may lack confidence in their abilities to manage a building due to limited work experience as a result of maternity breaks or care responsibilities. This should be considered in the asset management process.	
The impact of a community building closure would reduce or limit access to local activities available for all but there is evidence that older and younger people use buildings more because they are local venues. Maintaining access to community buildings would potentially provide positive impacts through	Many buildings identified that older people were the main users, that they provided a 'lifeline' for older people. A number of activities which were mostly used by older and younger people were identified during consultation. These activities were often age specific, including bingo, lunch clubs, bowls, keep fit; junior theatre, dance, youth clubs, sexual health clinics.	Age actions: Investigate other options such as social enterprise or VCS involvement where building users feel they are unable to take on an asset due to their age.
continuing activities and opportunities for new activity. There is also positive potential to improve relationships between older and younger people through shared activities. Older people may feel unable to take on a building through the	The consultation responses frequently stated that there were no other local facilities available. For many older people the availability of local activities is important because they provide social opportunities with friends and venues which are seen as 'safe'. The activities provided in community buildings often	Promote positive opportunities for younger people to be involved in managing community buildings.
	 building closure would reduce or limit access to local activities available for all but there is evidence that older and younger people use buildings more because they are local venues. Maintaining access to community buildings would potentially provide positive impacts through continuing activities and opportunities for new activity. There is also positive potential to improve relationships between older and younger people through shared activities. Older people may feel unable to 	Imited work experience as a result of maternity breaks or care responsibilities. This should be considered in the asset management process.The impact of a community building closure would reduce or limit access to local activities available for all but there is evidence that older and younger people use buildings more because they are local venues. Maintaining access to community buildings would potentially provide positive impacts through continuing activities and opportunities for new activity. There is also positive potential to improve relationships between older and younger people through shared activities.Many buildings work experience as a result of maternity breaks or care responsibilities. This should be considered in the asset management process.Many buildings identified that older people were the main users, that they provided a 'lifeline' for older people. A number of activities which were mostly used by older and younger people were identified during consultation. These activities were often age specific, including bingo, lunch clubs, bowls, keep fit; junior theatre, dance, youth clubs, sexual health clinics.The consultation responses frequently stated that there were no other local facilities available.There is also positive potential to improve relationships between older people may feel unable to take on a building through theOlder people may feel unable to take on a building through the

reducing isolation.
Younger people often rely on others for transport so local activities are more accessible and can promote independence. Local, reasonably priced activities provide positive opportunities for younger people with
limited finances.
Consultation responses from the Citizen's Panel identified that older people prefer to use community buildings during weekday daytimes, younger people preferred weekends. Of those who said they didn't use community buildings younger people stated that they did not know where the building was or what activities were offered. One in nine respondents felt encouraging young people to use buildings was important.
From the review questionnaires returned around one third were completed by people aged 65 or over. Over 50% of responses identified community buildings as the heart of the community/lifeline/combats isolation. Questionnaire responses profile was 60% female and 40% male; 1.3% were under 18 years, 5.3% aged 25-34,17.3% aged 35-44,
16% aged 45-54, 25.3% aged 55-64, 32% aged 65-74 and 2.7% aged over 75 years.

		The asset transfer process will require knowledge of a range of legal and technical issues as well as capacity to take on responsibility for managing the building's future. Some older people may lack confidence in their abilities to manage a building or may not feel able to take on responsibilities due to their age. The process may also create positive opportunities to engage younger people in managing buildings. These issues should be considered in the asset management process.	
Disability	 The impact of a community building closure would reduce or limit access to local activities available for all but there are additional issues relating to access for disabled people. Maintaining access to community buildings would potentially provide positive impacts through improving access and encouraging participation of disabled people. Disabled people may feel unable to take on a building through the asset transfer process or they 	Access improvements are included in the information on each building which will be used in the asset transfer process. The process will provide an opportunity to raise awareness of access, ensure appropriate policies are in place and promote inclusion of disabled people. The Community Building Strategy will invest £2. 15m some of this investment will be used to improve disability access. A number of activities across physical, mental and learning disability were identified during consultation. These activities included specific sessions for vulnerable adults, health improvement groups, learning and development opportunities.	Disability actions: Provide reasonable adjustments and appropriate support for disabled people during the asset transfer process. Ensure the asset transfer process includes information on access improvements and disability equality.

		1
may require additional support in relation to their disability.	There are potential links with age where older people also use buildings for health needs. For many disabled people the availability of local activities is important where they have limited access to private transport and are more likely to rely on others for transport or care. Access to social opportunities and venues which are seen as 'safe' also promotes participation in community life. The asset transfer process will require knowledge of a range of legal and technical issues as well as capacity to take on responsibility for managing the building's future. Some disabled people may lack confidence in their abilities to manage or feel unable to take on responsibility due to their disability. This should be considered in the	
	participation in community life. The asset transfer process will require knowledge of a range of legal and technical issues as well as capacity to take on responsibility for managing the building's future. Some disabled people may lack confidence in their abilities to manage or feel	
	Suggested access and disability should be considered in Grant Aid criteria. Questionnaire responses profile was 19.2% disabled people and 80.8% non-disabled.	

Race/Ethnicity	There is limited evidence of direct impact on race/ethnicity.	Two buildings identified activities which involved people from black or minority ethnic backgrounds. Questionnaire responses profile was white English (73.2%), British (22.5%), Irish (2.8%) and any other white background (1.4%).	
Religion or belief	There is limited evidence of direct impact on religion or belief.		
Sexual orientation	There is no evidence available of impact on sexual orientation.	There is no evidence from consultation or activities. Questionnaire responses profile was 97.2% heterosexual/straight, 1.4% gay man with 'other' for the remaining 1.4%.	

How will this promote positive relationships between different communities? Maintaining access to local buildings is a key aspect of promoting positive relationships within communities. Closure is likely to have a negative affect on communities unless an appropriate alternative is identified. Any developments on the back of investments would need to be supported by robust business planning which would have to show how the building was 'reaching out' to the wider community, including those with protected characteristics.

Section three: Review and Conclusion

Summary: please provide a brief overview, including impact, changes, improvements and any gaps in evidence.

The impact assessment has considered the potential effects of each option and evidence from consultation.

The final proposal recommends that the Council's 120 community buildings are placed into the five categories as set out below:

- a) Invest from the current financial programme
- b) Do not invest from the current programme unless additional resources become available
- c) Do not invest and take immediate action to close or Asset Transfer
- d) Confirm closure. These are buildings that are already closed and will be passed to the Assets section for disposal using the procedures in the Acquisition and Disposal Strategy 2010/2011
- e) Do not invest as full repair and insurance leases already in place. This should have no change on current delivery.

Potential closures would impact on all the community in some way. Alternative facilities and activities may not be available locally which has a higher likelihood of impacting on older people, young people and women, as well as disabled people and their carers who may have limited access to transport or other venues.

Proposals for investment will allow for the involvement and engagement of the wider community in the developments and potential to significantly improve a number of community buildings including improvements to access. The aim of investment is to improve access for all but there would be specific consideration of disability access improvements, this will provide a positive impact by encouraging disabled people's participation in community life and access to local venues.

If investment as outlined in options 3 and 4 were to happen then there would have to be budget reductions in other council services which could potentially have impacts on communities with protected characteristics.

Asset transfer may also strengthen local communities and offer greater opportunities for participation, including disabled people and younger people. Any changes to grant aid would take into account the opportunities to promote equality. There are also potential impacts where some groups, for example older people, disabled people and women, may feel less confident or able to take over a community building as part of the asset transfer process. There are mitigating actions to provide tailored support as each building is considered, specific equalities issues for individual communities will also be considered for each transfer proposal. The Community Buildings action plan includes intensive support resources allocation. This will include the formation of a time limited team to deliver support to management committees, user groups and provide training opportunities. This will be delivered by a community buildings team in partnership with the voluntary sector. The aim of which is to ensure that all community building management committees have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibility in regards to equality and diversity as well as ensuring equal access to the transfer process. Another mitigating action includes identifying alternative management arrangements to maintain community buildings, this could involve social enterprise or voluntary/community organisations.

The consultation and information on activities highlighted impacts for gender, age and disability with no evidence to show direct impact on race/ethnicity, religion/belief or sexual orientation.

Gender impacts were more likely to affect women as evidence suggests they use community buildings more than men, particularly for activities relating to children or older people. There are a higher number of older women in the population so impacts on age are also more likely to affect women. Many consultation responses identified that older people were the main users of community buildings with frequent examples of specific activities relating to health, learning and social opportunities. There were also activities aimed at children and younger people, including baby and toddler sessions, youth clubs and health clinics. Activities for disabled people ranged across physical, mental and learning disabilities.

The potential impacts relate to risk of closure for some buildings or changes to activities if responsibility for the building is transferred. Loss of or limited access to local activities is more likely to affect older or younger people, women or disabled people as they may be less likely to have private transport or rely on others for care and support. Community buildings are often seen as 'safe' spaces which provide opportunities for social activities as well as health, learning and participation in wider community life. Losing local facilities could have a negative effect on health, wellbeing, independence and involvement unless appropriate alternatives are identified. Supporting the asset transfer process would mitigate this to an extent by aiming to retain local provision and encourage wider participation.

Action to be taken	Officer responsible	Target	In which plan will this action
		Date	appear
Depending on the decision of Cabinet to consult, a detailed impact assessment will be carried out for each building affected. This will start to look at mitigating actions such as alternative local venues and access to public transport.		Completed	
A consultation process will be set in motion which will	Gordon Elliott	Completed	

look at buildings individually as well as at the criteria for			
grant aid and the approach to asset transfer. Ensure that individual asset transfer process includes targeted support for those who may have limited experience of business planning or management processes.	Gordon Elliott	May 2012	
Ensure equality impacts are included in business plans for community buildings	Gordon Elliott	May 2012	
Ensure equality impacts and mitigating actions are considered as part of exit strategy for buildings identified for closure	Gordon Elliott	May 2012	
Ensure asset transfer process includes information on Equality Act responsibilities.	Gordon Elliott	May 2012	
Investigate other options such as social enterprise or VCS involvement where building users feel they are unable to take on an asset due to their gender, age or disability.	Gordon Elliott	May 2012	
Gender actions: Encourage those taking on responsibility for buildings to consider opportunities for involving men.	Gordon Elliott	May 2012	
Age actions: Promote positive opportunities for younger people to be involved in managing community buildings.	Gordon Elliott	May 2012	
Disability actions: Provide reasonable adjustments and appropriate support for disabled people during the asset transfer process.	Gordon Elliott	May 2012	
Ensure the asset transfer process includes information on access improvements and disability equality.	Gordon Elliott	May 2012	

When will this assessment be reviewed?	Date: September 2012	
Are there any additional assessments that need to be	Individual asset transfer decisions will consider equality issues.	
undertaken in relation to this assessment?		
Lead officer - sign off: Gordon Ellliott	Date:20.1.12	
Service equality representative - sign off: Kay Winter	Date:20.1.12	

Please email your completed Impact Assessment to the Equality team - equalities@durham.gov.uk.