

Section 1 – Service Details and Summary of EIA Activity

Title of activity: Review of Life Line and On-site Support Services

Lead Officer(s) responsible for this EIA: Jill Walton/Hazel Neasham

Telephone: 01325 388505

Service Group: Neighbourhood Services and Resources

Service or Team: Housing and Building Services

Assistant Director accountable for this EIA: Pauline Mitchell

Who else will be involved in Carrying out the EIA: Janet Walke, Deena Wallace, Jill Walton, Denise Rudkin, Helen Watson, Elaine Taylor, Victoria Dixon

What stage has the EIA reached? Update as EIA develops.		
Stage	Date	Summary of position
Stage 1: Initial Officer Assessment. Whole Population likely to be affected identified	24/9/13	<i>This proposal does not impact on the WHOLE POPULATION but a section of service users.</i>
Stage 2: Further Assessment. Target Population likely to be affected identified	24/9/13	This proposal may impact on users of Life Line and On-site Support Services. There are implications for multiple impacts from the Extra Care Project where there are some service users
Stage 3: Further Assessment. Individuals likely to be affected identified	24/9/13	Individual users of the Life Line and On-site Support Services receiving a subsidy through Supporting People and/or Housing Benefit to be identified prior to assessment of impacts.
Stage 4: Analysis of Findings	18/9/14 6/10/14	The individuals using the Life-line Services across the borough have been contacted and asked for their views on the proposal and the impact it may have on their lives individually. EIA written up from information gathered and submitted for comments from Mary Hall/Deena Wallace and Victoria Dixon.
Stage 5: Sign-Off		Completed by Pauline Mitchell
Stage 6: Reporting and Action Planning	6/10/14	Initial action plan developed and reporting timescales suggested.

Equality Impact Assessment – Lifeline Services Review Removal of Supporting People Subsidy

Project Aims:

The aim of the project is to make the service cost neutral by removing the General Fund budgeted contribution of £336,919. This amount is paid to some DBC lifeline clients to subsidise the cost of lifeline service and External Support Providers in the form of a subsidy paid to the housing provider for those tenants who qualify for support.

The areas of service affected are:-

Life Line provides a 24-hour response service via an initial contact with CCTV followed by a response officer calling on the person should CCTV be unable to resolve the call. The service provides an alarm unit linked to a telephone line together with a pendant or pull-cord and or additional devices e.g. Telecare, which the user can activate (or the equipment activates on behalf of client) to summon help from a 24 hour staffed response service. The assistance can be from family, friends, health or social care staff, but primarily from a response officer. This service is provided to:-

- DBC housing tenants
- Housing association tenants whose landlords contract with DBC housing
- Individuals who contract directly with DBC housing who live in housing association properties or their own properties

On-site Support Services provides as on-site scheme manager service to older people (Monday-Friday during the day, within normal working hours) with evening and weekend response via the community alarm service. This is provided to:-

- DBC housing tenants who reside in a sheltered housing scheme or an extra care scheme
- Registered social tenants where landlords contract with DBC Supporting People. These clients have an out of hours call monitoring service provided by the housing association so do not use the community alarm service.

The users of the following services are within scope of this EIA:

- Darlington Borough Council Sheltered Accommodation: Provision of Scheme Manager Support (on-site support) and alarm/response provision;
- Darlington Borough Council Extra Care: Provision of Scheme Manager (on-site support) and alarm/response provision;
- Housing Association Onsite Support: Provision of Scheme Manager Support;
- Housing Association Extra Care: Provision of Scheme Manager Support;
- Lifeline Community alarm and response service;
- The other commissioned elements of the wider service delivery, including the equipment contracts and the call handling software;
- The current SLA in place with CCTV to deliver the call handling element of the service;
- Assistive Technology.

The Equality Impact Assessment has invited comments from the current users of the services including both Council tenants and tenants of other providers, as well as inviting comments on the proposals from the wider population who are not current users of the services.

Who will be affected by the proposal?

Whole Population

This proposal does not affect the WHOLE POPULATION

Target population

The population affected are those individuals using the following services;

- Darlington Borough Council Sheltered Accommodation: Provision of Scheme Manager Support (on-site support) and alarm/response provision;
- Darlington Borough Council Extra Care: Provision of Scheme Manager (on-site support) and alarm/response provision;
- Housing Association Onsite Support: Provision of Scheme Manager Support;
- Housing Association Extra Care: Provision of Scheme Manager Support;
- Lifeline Community alarm and response service;
- The other commissioned elements of the wider service delivery, including the equipment contracts and the call handling software;
- The current SLA in place with CCTV to deliver the call handling element of the service
- Assistive Technology;
- Older people and Vulnerable Adults living in affected schemes.

Figure 1.1 below outlines the changes in age groupings during 2013. There is no significant movement across the age profiles; the trend is stable for the period March 2012 to July 2013.

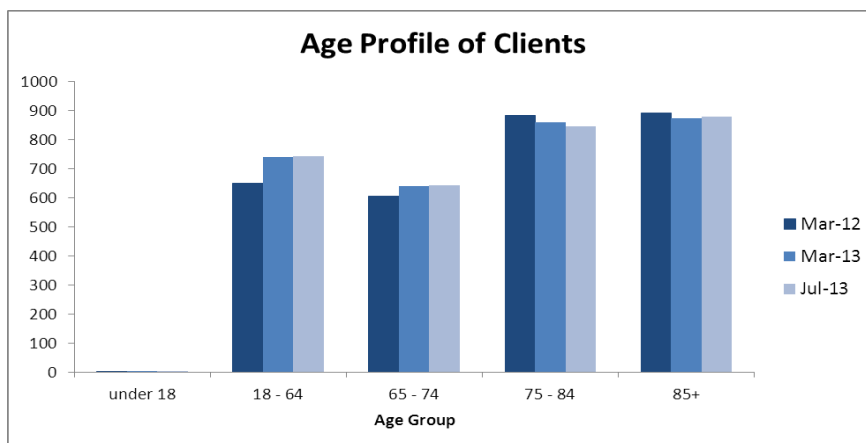


Fig 1

The table divides the age groups into five age bands.

Under 18; 18 to 64; 65 to 74; 75 to 84 and aged over 85.

The levels within each grouping have remained stable over the last eighteen months.

The following table (Figure 2) shows the breakdown of current service users by age, gender, postcode and property type. This data is correct as at July 2013.

These key points summarise the table below.

3,114 individuals use the service

2,927 or 93% of residents live in the urban area in either DL1 or DL3 postcodes

187 or 7% live in the rural wards

1,962 or 63% of individuals are female, 37% are male

2,958 or 95% of residents have either hardwired services, Lifeline only or Warden Schemes

	July 2013					
Age	Female		Male		Total	
under 18	0	0%	4	0%	4	0%
18 - 64	361	12%	381	12%	742	24%
65 - 74	340	11%	303	10%	643	21%
75 - 84	571	18%	275	9%	846	27%
85+	675	22%	204	7%	879	28%
	1947	63%	1167	37%	3114	
PostCode						
DL1	1030	33%	673	22%	1703	55%
DL16	1	0%	0	0%	1	0%
DL2	132	4%	54	2%	186	6%
DL3	763	25%	425	14%	1188	38%
DL5	21	1%	15	0%	36	1%
	1947	63%	1167	37%	3114	
Scheme						
Hardwired	373	12%	342	11%	715	23%
Extra Care	77	2%	27	1%	104	3%
Declined Service Charge On	7	0%	9	0%	16	1%
Declined Service No Charge	14	0%	31	1%	45	1%
Housing Association Lifeline	90	3%	42	1%	132	4%
Lifeline Only	652	21%	232	7%	884	28%
Wardened Schemes	539	17%	400	13%	939	30%
Housing Association Hardwired	195	6%	84	3%	279	9%
	1947	63%	1167	37%	3114	
Scheme by Postcode	DL1	DL16	DL2	DL3	DL5	Total
Declined Service Charge On	13	0	1	2	0	16
Declined Service No Charge	38	0	0	7	0	45
Extra Care	72	0	0	32	0	104
Hardwired	441	0	21	253	0	715
Housing Association Hardwired	49	0	0	230	0	279
Housing Association Lifeline	97	0	2	33	0	132
Lifeline Only	357	0	93	421	13	884
Wardened Schemes	636	1	69	210	23	939
Grand Total	1703	1	186	1188	36	3114

Fig 2

An essential part of the review of the service is the revised job description for Scheme Managers. This element of the proposal has been designed closely with the staff involved and has identified a number of positive impacts for service users.

- Enhanced service for residents
- Single point of contact and continuity in dealing with queries e.g. housing management
- No impact on emergency arrangements giving residents peace of mind.

The potential for some negative impacts have also been identified:

- Capacity of managers to cover sites

- Reduced capacity for community work and activities
- Continuity of contact with residents
- Involvement of the wider community in the schemes

Mitigating actions have been identified throughout the assessment process and consideration of their efficacy in reducing negative impacts included in the Equality Impact Assessment. At this stage the introduction of the Age UK/Police 'Good Friends' scheme in Sheltered Housing is considered as a positive mitigating action where reduced capacity may affect service users. The mitigating options have been listed in the Action Plan on page 14.

Individuals

Individuals within the service user group will be listed and assessed for the impact of the proposals.

Currently 3,293 addresses are receiving services of which 1,864 receive a subsidy funded by Supporting People. There are 1,429 self-funders who will not be affected by the proposal. Of the 1,864 subsidy recipients 1,003 receive Community Alarm assistance only (A,D,G); the remaining 861 live in DBC Sheltered Housing, DBC Extra Care, Housing Association Sheltered Schemes or Housing Association Extra Care (B,C,E,F). [see **EIA Annex 1**]

Supporting People Client Lists – these have been reviewed to ensure accuracy by cross-referencing with Finance and Lifeline Services.

Life Line Client Lists - these have been reviewed to ensure accuracy by cross-referencing with Supporting People and Finance.

Finance records – on-going review and rationalisation of finance records

Age profile of residents in affected properties completed by Lifeline and Supporting People Services (see Fig 1 and Fig 2 above).

Disability profile of residents in affected properties – information sought from providers and DBC system records.

Phase 1 Consultation Update:

Questionnaires developed to gather information regarding the impacts on their residents of any changes to conditions of tenancy, costs etc. Four Scheme Landlords - Hanover, Housing21, Anchor, and Endeavour Housing, provided information on how they will address the changes to the funding regime.

Hanover has a policy for removing the subsidy offering tenants a series of scenarios and the tenants vote on what will happen. This is a national arrangement which operates in all of their sites.

Housing 21 – the cost of the changes in charging will be passed on £ for £. A meeting is to be held with residents and DBC is requested to attend.

Anchor Housing pass on the cost of the changes £ for £, their tenants are already aware of the pending changes.

Endeavour Housing – they need to consult with Darlington Housing Association (DHA). They may offer some subsidy delayed by year end activity.

It is important to ensure all impacts are gathered and recorded accurately with a robust audit trail.

Finance:

Service users will be reviewed over the next 12 months as part of the routine financial assessment process. Ensuring maximisation of income from DWP benefits will be optimised and individuals encouraged in applying for any relevant benefits.

Next Steps:

To ensure impacts are collected and analysed to provide decision-makers with an accurate picture which reflects the impacts on providers, and residents whilst gathering the views of representative groups.

Section 3: Officer Assessment:

Protected Characteristics	Potential Impact Positive/Negative/ Not Applicable			Potential level of impact				Summary of Impact
	P	N	NA	H	M	L	nil	
Age	P	N	NA	H	M	L	nil	The majority of users of the service are over the age of 50. The level of impact varies from individual to individual although it is not possible to identify common issues relating to age.
Race	P	N	NA	H	M	L	nil	The potential impacts of the proposal are not influenced by an individual's race/ethnicity.
Sex	P	N	NA	H	M	L	nil	The potential impacts of the proposal are not influenced by an individual's gender/sex.
Gender Reassignment	P	N	NA	H	M	L	nil	The potential impacts of the proposal are not influenced by whether an individual falls within this protected characteristic.
Disability (summary of detail on next page)	P	N	NA	H	M	L	nil	The disabled users of the service vary in age. The level of impact varies from individual to individual it has been possible to identify common issues for disabled people and specific disabilities.
Religion or belief	P	N	NA	H	M	L	nil	The potential impacts of the proposal are not influenced by an individual's faith or religious belief.
Sexual Orientation	P	N	NA	H	M	L	nil	The potential impacts of the proposal are not influenced by an individual's sexual orientation.
Pregnancy or maternity	P	N	NA	H	M	L	nil	The potential impacts of the proposal are not influenced by whether a woman falls within this protected characteristic.
Marriage/ Civil Partnership	P	N	NA	H	M	L	nil	The potential impacts of the proposal are not influenced by whether an individual has married/civil partnership status.

Fig 3

The table above (Fig 3) shows the nine protected characteristics from the Equality Act 2010 which are age, race, sex, gender reassignment, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, and marriage or civil partnership.

Of these nine characteristics only age and disability have potential impacts from the proposals. The negative impacts have been assessed as having medium impact on individuals however; this is variable from person to person.

For age, the majority of users of the service are over the age of 50. The level of impact varies from person to person although it is not possible to identify common issues relating to age. The disabled users of the service vary in age and the level of impact varies from individual to individual it has been possible to identify common issues for disabled people and specific disabilities.

Summary of potential impacts for disabled people:

The table below, Fig 4, gives details of different impairments and the impacts on individuals with impaired mobility, vision, hearing, learning, mental health, long-term limiting illnesses and multiple impairments. The information gathered from individuals has been collated and the issues and impacts highlighted by people have been summarised to reflect the impacts of the proposed changes. **EIA Annex 2** contains all the comments received from individuals in their own words.

Fig 5 provides details of the cumulative impacts of other changes on the individuals involved in the Lifeline Review and the proposed removal of the Supporting People subsidy.

Protected Characteristics	Potential Impact			Potential level of impact				Summary of Impact
	Positive	Negative	Not Applicable	H	M	L	nil	
Mobility Impairment	P	N	NA	H	M	L	nil	The information gathered from individuals has been collated and the issues and impacts highlighted by people have been summarised to reflect the impacts of the proposed changes. See Appendix 2 for all comments from individuals.
Visual impairment	P	N	NA	H	M	L	nil	
Hearing impairment	P	N	NA	H	M	L	nil	
Learning Disability	P	N	NA	H	M	L	nil	
Mental Health	P	N	NA	H	M	L	nil	
Long Term Limiting Illness	P	N	NA	H	M	L	nil	
Multiple Impairments	P	N	NA	H	M	L	nil	
Other - Specify	P	N	NA	H	M	L	nil	

Fig 4

Cumulative Impacts	
Change activities	Potential cumulative impacts
Extra Care Project	The main impacts highlighted by individuals are: Rising costs of food, heating and other bills. Loneliness if unable to afford to visit friends/family Depression through social isolation.
Housing Benefit changes related to Universal Credit	A future development which will affect some tenants who receive services from Lifeline.

Fig 5

Section 4: Engagement Decision

Is engagement with affected people with Protected Characteristics required, now or during the further development of the activity? **YES**

The Equality Impact Assessment is complex due to the large number of individuals potentially affected by the proposal and the range of impacts on those individuals. A phased approach to the impact assessment is being taken following advice from the Legal Services and Engagement teams.

Information prepared for providers, representative groups and individual service users will be used to gather their views and impacts. The process will be phased. Phase 1 will gather information from Providers. The information gathered will be used to inform Phase 2 (Representative Groups e.g. Tenants' Board; Age UK) and likewise Phase 3 with residents and tenants using the service. It is important to establish the level of consultation required in phase 3 following the information provided in phases one and two e.g. the proportion and range groups of users to be engaged with to capture a true reflection of the impacts.

Phase 1: Providers

The first phase of consultation work was undertaken with providers between January and March 2014 which involved the following organisations:-

- Endeavour Housing
- Housing 21
- Anchor Housing
- Hanover Housing
- Railway Housing Association
- Fabrick Housing (now Thirteen following merger with Vela in April 2014)
- Four Housing
- Home Group

Phase 2: Consultation with Representative Groups

Meetings to be held with Representative Groups and invitations extended to the Tenants' Board, GOLD, Alzheimer's Society, Age UK, Mencap, Darlington Town Mission, Darlington Carers' Group, and DAD to discuss the proposal, its' potential impacts and suggestions to mitigate any impacts for individuals.

Officers met with the groups during June and July 2014 and information gathered from these meetings.

Phase 3: Consultation with tenants and residents

A comprehensive consultation process was agreed for tenants and residents, potentially affected, using the Lifeline Services. The approach adopted was to write to all individuals who may have changes to their charges from April 2015. Over 2,800 letters and forms were issued to gather the views and impacts of the proposals.

The findings from the three phases of consultation can be found in **Section 6: Engagement Findings.**

Section 5 – Involvement and Engagement

Has the assessment shown that the proposal will treat any groups of people with Protected Characteristics differently from other people? **No**

Will the differential treatment advance equality for people with Protected Characteristics? **No**

Will the differential treatment cause or increase disadvantage for people with Protected Characteristics? **No**

Involvement and Engagement Plan

Which organisations, groups and individuals do you need to involve or engage and how?

Provider Groups - letters sent to all providers to establish impacts of the proposal and mitigating actions e.g. providers may not pass on the full cost of the changes to service users.

Representative Groups - meetings held with responding Interest Groups e.g. Tenants' Board, Age UK, Mencap, DAD and Alzheimer's Society to discuss impacts and mitigation.

Residents – initially the decision for further one to one impact assessment was made after the information gathered from the Provider and Interest Groups had been evaluated. Following the responses received from tenants and residents 37 respondents were offered the opportunity to meet with officers to discuss their concerns.

Section 6: Engagement Findings

Phase 1: Providers

Several housing providers operate within the Borough [Darlington]. All providers have been contacted to establish their views of the proposed changes to the Supporting People Subsidy from April 2015.

Meetings held with the individual providers from March to May 2014 enabled open and frank discussions about the proposals and the potential effects on tenants. The meetings gave officers the opportunity to discuss mitigating actions and the ways in which individual landlords would work with tenants to explain the proposals and gather information about impacts.

The primary concern being, to ensure that residents were not made unduly anxious about 'a proposal' and that they could articulate their views either to their landlord or directly to the Council.

These sessions gathered information about the proposed changes from April 2015. The key considerations were:-

- Is the unit cost to be passed directly to the client at its' current rate?
- Is the provider looking at the current split between housing related support and housing management?
- Is there a possibility this split could be realigned, to increase the housing benefit received?
- Is the provider considering the role of Estate Manager in the scheme(s)?
- Is the provider considering reviewing their tenancy and letting conditions?
- Where alarm services are delivered by DBC Lifeline on their behalf, is this arrangement being reviewed? If yes, will this impact on the technology installed and any integrated systems with door entry/fire protection?
- Are there any other planned changes which might have a cumulative impact for individuals?
- Has the organisation got plans/procedures in place to carry out negotiations with affected individuals?
- In this region has the support provider had other subsidy contacts withdrawn?
- Any other issues the provider would like to include?

Phase Two: Representative Groups

Meetings held with Interest Groups; the Tenants' Board, MIND, Alzheimer's' Society and DAD to discuss the proposal, its' potential impacts and suggestions to mitigate any impacts for individuals. Officers met with the groups during June and July 2014 and the information gathered from these meetings is shown below.

The proposal was presented to the Tenants' Board by the Service Manager, who outlined the detail of the proposal and how it would affect different groups of tenants. Following a comprehensive question and answer session the following key points were made:

- Letters to residents are clear and well worded
- £1.05 well worth it for the service they receive
- Need to ensure a good range of interest groups are invited to attend
- Although increase is relatively small '£1.20 could be a person's bus fare to go out'

The responding organisations provide significant support to vulnerable people in the borough. They expressed concerns about the proposal and felt that it would impact negatively on individuals.

The comments are listed below:-

- Both organisations felt that individuals not within the social care clientele are going to be most impacted.
- Removing the choice from the individual if the service is a condition of tenancy
- Individuals with dementia will not pay and they won't understand they have to pay which may put their home at risk. Therefore mechanisms need to be put in place to support these individuals.
- There needs to be better understanding of the cumulative effects of all the changes which are impacting on people financially such as 'bedroom tax', council tax contributions
- DAD felt that the changes to Severe Disablement Allowance had caused a reduction in financial assessments.
- Individuals who are self-funders have a lifeline which reduces their social care bill, how is this being addressed?

It was felt that further consultation was required with a wider group and with the involvement of carers wherever possible. A mitigation to prevent the increase in costs was suggested by MIND through exploring options to use BCF funding. Phase 3 of the consultation extends the numbers of individuals involved and includes carers in the feedback.

Phase 3: Residents/Tenants

A comprehensive consultation process was agreed for tenants and residents using the Lifeline Services. The approach adopted was to write to all individuals who may have changes to their charges from April 2015. Over 2,800 letters and forms were issued to gather the views and impacts of the proposals.

The response rate was 24% (676) and the breakdown of responses is as follows:

- Overall 68.0%(460) stated they would not be affected by the proposal
- Overall 29.7% (201) stated they would be affected by the proposal
- Overall 1.2% (8) were unsure/don't know
- Overall 1% - (7) didn't answer

A small number of respondents (37) stated they would like to talk to someone 'face to face' of which seven (18%) have been contacted by telephone and their queries resolved and impacts gathered. The remaining 30 individuals have been contacted directly either by phone, letter or in person to gather their views and to ensure that they have the opportunity to contribute to the consultation process and impact assessment; their views are contained within **EIA Annex 2**.

A number of respondents felt it was unfair for the Council to put up charges as this affects the most vulnerable in society who are affected by cumulative impacts of increases in the costs of living e.g. fuel bills, council tax, food etc. and changes to benefits

Of the 201 respondents stating that they would be affected by the proposals the emerging impacts from the feedback are:

- Insufficient money to pay for everything, therefore decisions would have to be made whether to pay for heating or food;
- Risk of isolation due to loneliness not being able to socialise with friends or travel to see family;
- Fear of not feeling safe anymore if Lifeline not affordable and removed;
- The cumulative effects of a further increase in expenditure on top of increases in other charges by the Council;
- Deterioration in medical conditions especially mental health due to lack of money to enable activities and socialising which maintains good mental health and unable to attend support groups.

- Residents with lower increases expressed concern that rises year on year would begin to impact on their ability to afford the costs of living;
- Several residents stated they would cancel their contracts for Lifeline services if costs increased further.

The vast majority of respondents 68.0% (461) stated they would not be affected by the proposals. Some made comments relating to the service and how it affected them.

- The service provides peace of mind.
- Good value for money.
- ‘Some people want everything for free! If they really need the excellent, efficient and courteous service provided by Lifeline they should have to pay the whole amount, unless, of course, they are really destitute!!’
- Excellent service – ‘worth paying for.’
- ‘I feel safe’

The proposal would result in several changes to the weekly amounts payable by individuals, therefore the responses to the consultation and the associated impacts of the proposal have been further broken down to the different weekly amounts by which the charges could increase. The percentages in the following table (Fig 6) are based on each charge increase and the responses received.

Amount of proposed increase	Question: Are you affected by the proposal?						Total responses
	YES		NO		DON'T KNOW		
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
£1.03	67	32	141	67	5	2	213
£1.10	1	100	0	0	0	0	1
£1.77	58	17	278	81	6	2	342
£2.77	4	50	4	50	0	0	8
£2.83	6	67	3	33	0	0	9
£3.00	28	58	19	40	1	2	48
£3.56	1	100	0	0	0	0	1
£3.67	0	0	1	100	0	0	1
£5.05	8	44	10	56	0	0	18
Amount not known	-	-	-	-	-	-	35
Totals	173		456		12		676

Fig 6

There is a correlation where the levels of increase are higher and the respondents reporting that the proposal would affect them. In this case, increases of £2.77 or more per week indicate that 55% of respondents would be affected by the proposal, with 44% not affected and 1% stating ‘don’t know’. It is important to ensure that the views of those individuals affected by the proposal are accurately gathered. All responses have been collated into a spreadsheet gathering the individual’s details (where given) and the responses to the questionnaire in their own words. Copies of each response sheet have been scanned and securely stored together with the original hard copies. The full list of responses (anonymised) has been attached (see **EIA Annex 2**).

Further analysis of the responses relating to the protected characteristics is summarised in the tables below. The methodology for gathering this information was from a sample of 289 residents establishing their age and disability profiles.

Of the 289 individuals, 274 (95%) are aged over 60, with 243 (67.5%) having one or more impairments. (See Fig 7 and Fig 8 on page 14).

Age Profile	Numbers	% of sample	Age Profile	Numbers	% of sample
Under 50	2	0.6	65-69	45	15.6
50-54	4	1.4	70-74	55	19
55-59	9	3.1	75-79	67	23.2
60-64	34	11.8	80+	73	25.3
Fig 7			Totals	289	100.0

Disability Profile	Numbers	% of sample
No disability	117	32.5
Mobility impairment	74	20.6
Visual impairment	20	5.6
Hearing Impairment	51	14.2
Learning Disability	5	1.4
Mental Health	15	4.2
Long term limiting illness	40	11.1
Multiple impairments	38	10.6
Other	0	0.0

Fig 8

- a) How will the proposal help to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation?**
The proposal is not specifically aimed at reducing discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- b) How will the proposal help to advance equality of opportunity?** The proposal does not advance equality of opportunity.
- c) How will the proposal help to foster good relations?** The proposal is not specifically aimed at fostering good relations.

During the engagement process there were suggestions on how to avoid, minimise or mitigate any negative impacts which are detailed below.

Actions to mitigate the effects of the proposal:

- Benefit checks for all affected residents:** The maximisation of take-up of Attendance Allowance for residents by referral to Age UK or Citizens' Advice Bureau. Up to October 2014, 52 individuals have been referred to Age UK by Lifeline staff and of those:
 - 26 already received either Attendance Allowance or Disability Living Allowance;
 - 7 lower rate AA
 - 19 higher rate AA or DLA (middle or higher rates)
 - 20 applications have been submitted to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP);
 - 7 individuals do not wish to apply.
- Promotion of befriending schemes:** Encouraging residents to get involved with befriending schemes in the borough such as the Good Friends Scheme.
- Scheme Managers:** The new job description for Scheme Managers enables the staff to provide a more holistic support to residents and ensure that anyone having difficulties in paying their rent and charges is referred to the appropriate support agencies.
- Provider Subsidy:** Providers may choose to absorb all or some of the increased costs. The Darlington Housing Association Board which owns Worsley Park operated by Endeavour has agreed to subsidise the cost of the onsite warden. This reduces an increase of £9.05 to £5.05 for residents.

Section 7 – Reporting of Findings and Recommendations to Decision Makers

Based on the findings from the Equality Impact Assessment negative impacts have been identified which would affect individuals using Lifeline Services and receiving the Supporting People subsidy. Although negative impacts have been identified it is recommended to continue with the proposal to remove the Supporting People subsidy from April 1st, 2015.

A majority of individuals (460 or 68%) responding to the consultation stated they would not be impacted by the proposal. However, 201 (29.7%) respondents stated that they would be affected by the proposals and clearly articulated the following issues as negatively impacting on them if they were required to pay more for the service from April 1st, 2015.

- Insufficient money to pay for everything, therefore decisions would have to be made whether to pay for heating or food;
- Risk of isolation due to loneliness not being able to socialise with friends or travel to see family;
- Fear of not feeling safe anymore if Lifeline not affordable and removed;
- The cumulative effects of a further increase in expenditure on top of increases in other charges by the Council;
- Deterioration in medical conditions especially mental health due to lack of money to enable activities and socialising which maintains good mental health and unable to attend support groups.
- Residents with lower increases expressed concern that rises year on year would begin to impact on their ability to afford the costs of living;
- Several residents stated they would cancel their contracts for Lifeline services if costs increased further.

Of the respondents stating they would not be affected by the proposals a selection of the comments made relating to the service and how it affected them positively are shown below:

- The service provides peace of mind.
- Good value for money.
- 'Some people want everything for free! If they really need the excellent, efficient and courteous service provided by Lifeline they should have to pay the whole amount, unless, of course, they are really destitute!!'
- Excellent service – 'worth paying for.'
- 'I feel safe'

Section 8 – Action Plan and Performance Management

What is the negative impact?	Actions required to reduce/eliminate the negative impact (if applicable)	Who will lead on action	Target completion date
Insufficient money to pay for everything, therefore decisions would have to be made whether to pay for heating or food.	Benefit checks offered to all residents to maximise income.	Lifeline/AgeUK	Ongoing
Risk of isolation due to loneliness not being able to socialise with friends or travel to see family.	Introduce residents affected to the Befriending Schemes within the borough.	Lifeline/AgeUK	Ongoing
Fear of not feeling safe anymore if Lifeline not affordable and removed;	Benefit checks offered to all residents to maximise income.	Lifeline/AgeUK	Ongoing
Deterioration in medical conditions especially mental health due to lack of money to enable activities and socialising which maintains good mental health.	Ensure residents are given comprehensive information about support networks, and the range of befriending networks and support from CPNs if appropriate.	Lifeline	Ongoing
Residents with lower increases expressed concern that rises year on year would begin to impact on their ability to afford the costs of living.	Benefit checks offered to all residents to maximise income.	Lifeline/AgeUK	Ongoing
Several residents stated they would cancel their contracts for Lifeline services if costs increased further.	Benefit checks offered to all residents to maximise income.	Lifeline/AgeUK	Ongoing

Performance Management	
Date of the next review of the EIA	3 months from implementation
How often will the EIA action plan be reviewed?	3 monthly initially then annually
Who will carry out this review?	Head of Service (Hazel Neasham)/Service Manager (Jill Walton)

Section 9 - Sign-off when assessment is completed

Officer Completing the Form:		
Signed	Name:	Janet Walke
	Date:	October 16 th , 2014
	Job Title:	Senior Business Officer
Assistant Director:		
Signed	Name:	Pauline Mitchell
	Date:	20/10/14
	Service:	Assistant Director - Housing and Building Services