



Asbestos Policy

1.0 OVERVIEW / AIM

To ensure that Weaver Vale Housing Trust complies with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act and the Control of Asbestos Regulations (2006), in particular Regulation 4 “The Duty to Manage”.

To ensure the organisation maintains a safe and healthy working environment for both staff and others with regard to potential exposure to asbestos that may arise from the activities or undertakings of the Trust.

To minimise the risk of exposure to asbestos by ensuring that there is an appropriate asbestos management framework in place including procedures, registers, guidance notes and training of staff and contractors.

This Policy operates within the context of the legal framework for the management and control of asbestos including:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.
- The Control of Asbestos Regulations (2006)
- Other supporting information, including all relevant guidance notes and codes of practice.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

Asbestos is a group of naturally occurring fibrous crystalline silicates found in rock. There are three main types of asbestos:

Chrysotile	more commonly known as white asbestos
Amosite	more commonly known as brown asbestos
Crocidolite	more commonly known as blue asbestos

A “**hazard**” is something which has the potential to cause harm.

A “**risk**” is the chance that someone could be harmed and how severe that harm may be.

“**Harm**” is physical injury or ill health.

“**HSE**” - is the Health and Safety Executive

Type 1 Asbestos survey is more commonly known as a presumptive survey, where any unknown material content is presumed to contain asbestos.

Type 2 Asbestos survey is a survey undertaken by a licensed company where sampling and analysis is undertaken to determine the presence of asbestos.

Major works are defined as those which require technical input / pre-assessment by a surveyor, the preparation of drawings, sketch details, specifications, schedules or contract documents and should in all cases be subject to at least a Type 1 asbestos survey.

Minor works are defined as those which would normally be actioned by the issuing of a works order or instruction, do not normally require pre-assessment and would include emergency, reactive, routine, day-to-day or other small jobs which do not normally require preparation of specifications, schedules, drawings or other contract documents.

Note: It would not be practicable or reasonable for this type of work to be pre-surveyed for asbestos due to the numbers of orders raised and because of the effects that this would have on response times, service delivery and costs. However, some minor works are pre-assessed by senior trade staff that are not due an asbestos survey as a matter of course, but one will be requested if asbestos is suspected to be present.

ISO is the International Standards Organisation

UKAS is United Kingdom Accreditation Services

ACMs are Asbestos Containing Materials

3.0 POLICY

3.1 Policy Statement

Weaver Vale Housing Trust acknowledges and accepts its responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act and the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006 incorporating Regulation 4, "The Duty to Manage".

The Trust will comply with all codes of practice and guidance issued by the HSE in respect of the exposure of its employees and others to asbestos arising from the activities or undertakings of the Trust.

Weaver Vale Housing Trust will do all that is reasonable to protect all such persons from risk to health from exposure to Asbestos although it is recognised that there is no commitment to remove Asbestos in existing buildings where it does not constitute a risk to health.

The control of asbestos regulations require a sound management strategy to ensure that everyone who either works for or on behalf of the Trust, lives in a Trust property, or who may use a facility provided by the Trust, is not exposed to asbestos materials in a condition that may expose them to asbestos fibres.

In order to reduce the risk of exposure to Asbestos fibres the Trust will undertake the following priority actions:

Ensure that employees are made aware of locations where Asbestos is likely to be present in their work place.

Ensure that persons other than employees who have to work within the Trust's premises are made aware of the likely locations whereby ACMs may exist within the premises. For tenants, the tenants' handbook refers to the possibility of asbestos being in their home and offers advice and actions to take regarding asbestos.

Promote a culture, which respects both the presence of Asbestos and the danger of exposure to Asbestos fibres.

Ensure that an Asbestos Management System, to include regular monitoring is implemented in all premises controlled by the Trust.

This Statement is a supplement to the Trust's General Health and Safety Policy.

3.2 Policy detail

No new asbestos materials will be used in Trust owned premises.

Where existing installations include asbestos material which is sound, in good condition, and not yet subject to abrasion or deterioration, the material will be generally left undisturbed and its condition monitored and periodically assessed as defined.

Existing installations containing Asbestos materials damaged, deteriorating or inadequately sealed will either be removed and replaced by suitable material not containing Asbestos, or encapsulated, whichever is the most practical and positive way to prevent the release of Asbestos fibres. Asbestos materials likely to be disturbed by maintenance or other works will be labelled clearly where practical, and detailed in the scheme management plans.

WVHT properties have initially been sample surveyed for Asbestos by appropriately trained staff and external consultants. All staff and consultants carrying out asbestos surveys for the Trust will meet the standards as defined in ISO 17020 and ISO 17025 as accredited by U.K.A.S. The completed surveys form the basis of The Trust's management system, the objectives of which are as follows:

- To maintain a register of the nature, position and extent of Asbestos based materials within all premises and update it as and when necessary;
- To eliminate and where necessary effectively control the risk associated with Asbestos in establishments where building users, contractors, members of the public and employees are liable to be exposed;
- To use the register to offer advice to tenants, contractors and employees, of the location of Asbestos based materials in establishments, to enable them to take the necessary precautions to ensure their safety.

Further detailed surveys have been carried out at the Trust's sheltered accommodation blocks and managed properties. This enables us to assess the overall picture and prepare suitable management plans to effectively manage the situation. Relevant information collected will be disseminated when necessary to the relevant parties including:

- Building users, tenants, employees, as appropriate.
- Contractors working in or adjacent to the building, through the works order system, by asbestos awareness clauses in contract documentation and / or by reference to the asbestos registers held on-site.
- Staff involved in the maintenance of Trust premises to prevent deterioration of existing asbestos on site
- New staff
- The Health and Safety Executive
- The CDM Coordinator, to allow them to perform their duties under the Construction (Design & Management) Regulations 2007 if applicable
- Designers, who should be given relevant information to allow them to perform their duties under the Construction (Design & Management) Regulations
- Visitors to Trust premises as appropriate

Levels of competency will be set and proof of such competency will be ascertained before any party deals with any Asbestos related issue and before any works are carried out. This will apply to:

- Employees who have had relevant training in asbestos awareness and identifying possible asbestos containing material locations.
- Contractors and Consultants – Generally the Trust utilises the services of Airborne Environmental Consultants (AEC) who are a United Kingdom

Accreditation Service approved company for carrying out type 2 surveys, licensed repair work and any removal work. The tender process has been used on occasion for this kind of work, but AEC have usually proved strong in this process too.

The Asbestos Register will be regularly updated from information gathered from the surveys carried out by contractors prior to work and from records ascertained during any works. The Trust stores information on its computer database within the Property Information Software System (Orchard). All entries will be accompanied by a suitable location plan or description of exact location where reasonably practicable.

Information contained in the Asbestos Register will be available to all Trust staff, who in turn will ensure that all necessary information is brought to the attention of all contractors prior to the commencement of any building related works.

Where remedial measures are necessary for dealing with Asbestos material, the consultant or contractor employed by the Trust must comply with all relevant current legislation. Such remedial measures will be recorded and the Asbestos register updated accordingly.

Where remedial measures are necessary for dealing with asbestos material, proper reporting and notification procedures shall be adhered to throughout the operations.

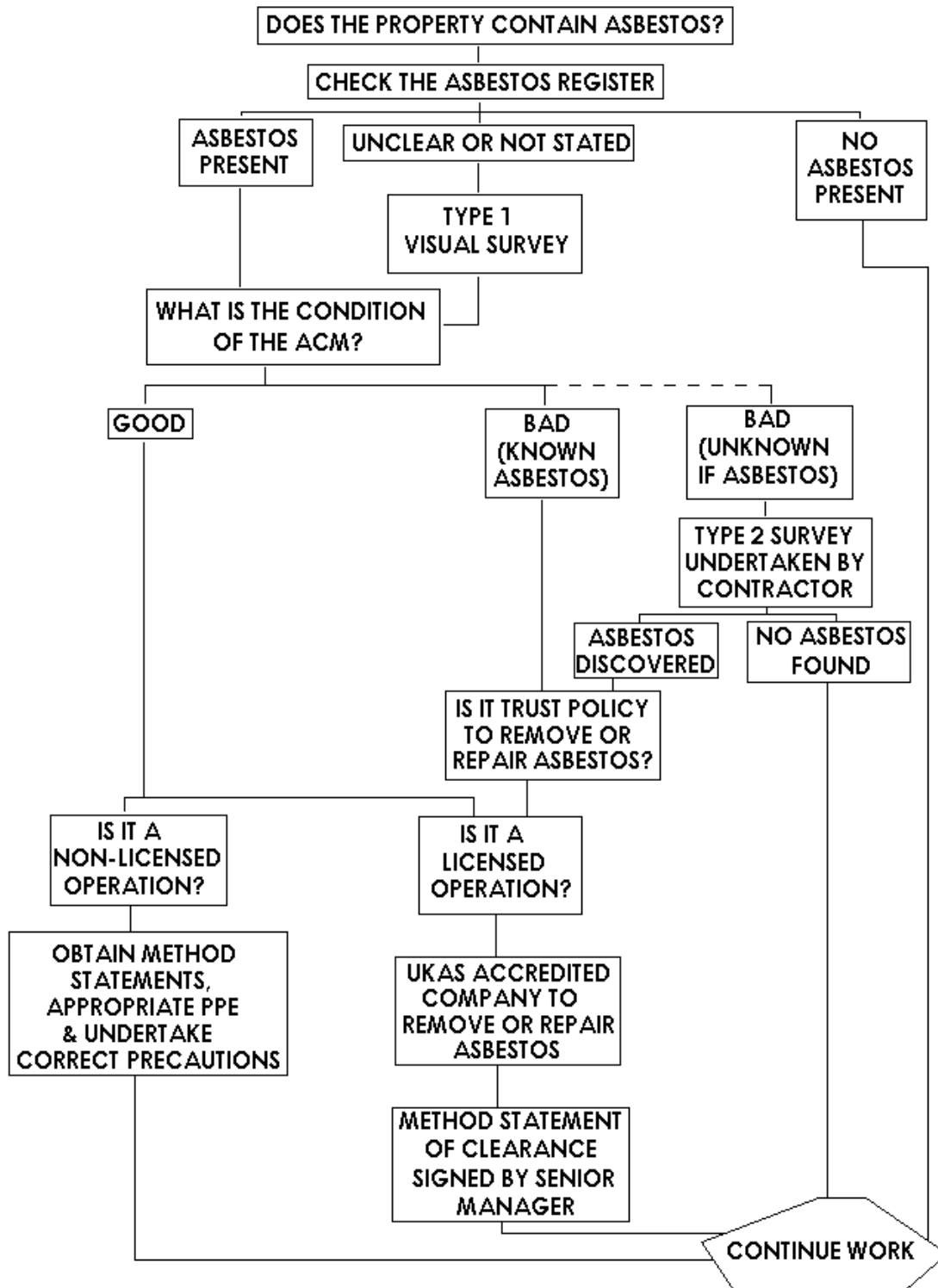
Where Trust employees become directly involved in Asbestos disturbance, a system for health surveillance will be established. Similarly, procedures for monitoring the health of any person who has been exposed to asbestos fibres above the action levels detailed in the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006 will be established. Health Surveillance Records will be kept for a period of 40 years after the last entry.

No major works, as previously defined, may be undertaken without first carrying out at least a Type 1 Asbestos survey during the design and work planning stage.

No minor works, as previously defined, may be undertaken unless the person intending to carry out this work has received appropriate instruction in Asbestos awareness.

Where the Trust carries out work in properties it does not own, building owners will be requested to provide access to an asbestos register before work commences. Our workforce, deployed to work in non-Trust property will be appropriately trained in asbestos awareness.

All staff employed to carry out work to Trust premises shall adhere to the following flowchart with respect to determining the actions required in relation to working with asbestos containing materials:



The Trust will annually make financial provision for the inspection, removal or treatment of Asbestos products within the Repairs, Maintenance and Improvement Budgets.

No property will be acquired or occupied for or on behalf of the Trust until the presence or otherwise of ACMs has been confirmed. If there are no validated records available for examination a detailed asbestos survey and report must be completed.

If the presence of ACMs is confirmed, priority assessment procedures detailed in the Health & Safety Executive’s ‘Method of Determining Hazardous Substances -100’ document must be followed. If the presence of ACMs is confirmed, the future occupancy and management of the

property should be carefully considered before entering into any agreement to purchase or occupy the building.

Void properties which are being prepared for re-letting shall have all internal ACM's which are damaged or pose a measurable risk to the prospective occupants and those working within the void property removed and replaced. All other ACM's shall be left in situ until the priority categorisation dictates their removal.

A synopsis of the Trusts asbestos register carried out prior to Stock Transfer is appended at Appendix 2

NOTE: - The original paper based asbestos register(s) are held by the Trust's Health and Safety Adviser

4.0 OUTCOMES FOR CUSTOMERS

The Trust strives to eliminate accidents and ill-health at work. Its aim is to provide a safe working environment at all times for all staff, customers and any other relevant third parties. Customers are likely to receive a better service from an accident and incident-free workforce. Customers should also be able to enjoy living in an environment that does not expose them to health risks liable to cause problems in the short, medium or long term.

5.0 OUTCOMES FOR THE TRUST

The safety of its workforce and anyone who may be affected by the work it does is paramount to the Trust. The Trust has adopted a sensible approach to Health and Safety and this policy complements the main health and safety policy and other policies established to manage specific areas of risk. The correct use of control measures identified will reduce the exposure of staff and others to the risks from airborne asbestos fibres whilst the Trust carries out its duties. In turn this will lead to a reduction in long term illness suffered by staff and others and reduce the number of potential ill-health compensation claims against the Trust.

6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

In respect of Health and Safety, the Trust treats all employees, customers and other relevant third parties equally. Anyone who feels they belong to a minority group should not be treated any differently from anyone else in respect of being exposed to the potential risks from asbestos as defined within this Policy but in line with identified hazards and control measures as part of the risk assessment process. A Race and Diversity Impact Assessment has been carried out as part of the policy review procedure and is appended with this policy.

7.0 MONITORING

Management plans will be developed from the results of surveys and actions being prioritised. Arrangements for proactive and reactive monitoring and review of the action plans will be the responsibility of the Director of Property Services and supported through involvement of the Trust Health and Safety Adviser who will inform of legislative changes.

8.0 CONSULTATION

All Health and Safety policies are formulated in conjunction with significant consultation with managers and the Health and Safety Forum. Customers and relevant third parties are not normally consulted with in respect of Health and Safety policies.

9.0 LINKS AND INTERDEPENDENCIES

All elements are covered in the main body of the policy. All Health and Safety legislative responsibilities are incorporated into this and every other Health and Safety policy that is formulated. The Trust's Guidance Note 8 - 'Asbestos Safety Booklet' has been formulated and designed to work in conjunction with and in support of this policy. The policy also links with the Asbestos Safety Essentials Task Manual published by the HSE which provides information regarding how to set about un-licensed tasks relating to working with asbestos containing materials. Both these documents are available from the Trust's health & safety adviser.

10.0 RESPONSIBILITY

Responsibilities within the management of the asbestos framework are defined in Appendix 1.

A breach of this Asbestos Policy and associated procedures by an employee will be taken seriously and failure of a member of staff to observe Trust requirements may result in disciplinary action being taken.

11.0 TRAINING

The Corporate Training Programme will include an annual general Asbestos awareness training course for relevant staff, to be determined by the Director of Property Services and Human Resources Manager and records of such training sessions will be kept on file within the Human Resources department.

Technical staff involved in the management of Asbestos removal contracts will be required to attend additional training

12.0 COMPLAINTS, COMPENSATION AND APPEALS

The Trust's Grievance Procedure is available for any staff who considers that the Trust is not operating in accordance with this policy.

13.0 REVIEW

The Policy shall be reviewed by the Director of Property Services in 2012 or at such time sooner if the policy is deemed no longer valid due to working procedures or legislative changes.

Responsibility for implementation and review of the policy shall be the Responsive Repairs, Building Services and Customer and Support Services Managers supported by Trust Health and Safety Advisor.

14.0 ACTION PLAN

This policy has previously been implemented and remains in force through the review process and beyond. No failure of cover is expected during the review process once the actions within this policy are adhered to.

Appendices to Policy:

Appendix 1 - Responsibilities of key employees

Appendix 2 - Synopsis of the original asbestos survey carried out at Stock Transfer

Appendix 3 - Race and Diversity Impact Assessment

Appendix 1

Responsibilities of Key Employees

Director of Property Services

The Director of Property Services, as the main Duty Holder, will have ultimate responsibility for the Trust's compliance with the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002. They will delegate direct responsibility for the implementation and acceptance of this policy to nominated employees and provide support for those implementing the policy. They will ensure that senior management periodically review asbestos management performance.

Enterprise Group Managers

These managers will have delegated responsibility for the Trust-wide implementation and assist in the review of the Asbestos Policy and associated procedure guides. The team will actively promote a culture, which respects both the presence of asbestos and the danger of exposure to asbestos fibres and will establish appropriate training programmes for employees likely to be involved in the management of asbestos.

Directors of other disciplines

These Directors will be responsible for ensuring that employees comply with the policy and supporting procedures within the areas they control. They will support the Trust Maintenance Team to ensure that policy objectives are met and will ensure that cost centre managers identify budget requirements to meet the cost of survey, investigation and removal/encapsulation works.

Other Managers & Supervisors (Leadership Team)

These managers will have a clear understanding of the Asbestos Policy and Procedures as it applies to their area of responsibility. They will co-operate fully with their Director and the Enterprise Group Managers and will seek additional budget allocations as necessary.

They will ensure that employees likely to be involved in day to day asbestos related issues, particularly those with responsibility for the Trust's maintenance activities, receive the appropriate training.

Appendix 2

Synopsis of the original asbestos survey carried out at Stock Transfer

The normal repair, maintenance, improvement and modernisation function of Trust properties means that asbestos containing materials may be encountered by various trades and external contractors engaged on works to all types of Trust owned property and structures and the following Policy has therefore been formulated.

ASBESTOS CEMENT RAINWATER GOODS:

In accordance with the policy and the pre-painting programme most of these goods have been removed. However, a few may exist where "right to buy's" have fallen through.

Subsequent cycles of pre-painting inspections should eliminate most of the remaining goods.

ASBESTOS CEMENT SOFFITS:

These items are inspected prior to pre-painting repair work at each property, if so required they will be replaced. If however the soffits are in good condition they will be left in situ for subsequent re-inspection before the next cycle of pre-painting repairs or other works. Painting of the soffit, if appropriate, will be carried out as part of external painting works.

OUTHOUSE ROOF (EXTERNAL)

Good progress has been made with the removal of outhouse roofs, however, where "right to buy's" have fallen through some remain.

OUTHOUSE ROOFS (INTERNAL SURFACES)

The undersides of outhouse roofs were inspected as part of the asbestos survey. The underside is also inspected if a re-covering of the external surface is required and any necessary repair or replacement is carried out, otherwise it is left in situ until its removal is dictated by the asbestos policy, as the product is very difficult to remove in a satisfactory manner.

ASBESTOS CEMENT GARAGE ROOFS:

Many garage roofs have been removed. However those in good condition and not part of the existing programme have been left in situ to be replaced at a later stage.

CENTRAL HEATING SYSTEMS:

The renewal of central heating boilers and warm air units includes for the removal of any associated asbestos containing material from the system or its enclosure.

ASBESTOS CEMENT SOIL AND VENT PIPE HOPPER-HEADS AND DOWNPIPES:

In accordance with the policy and the pre-painting programme, the majority of these goods have been removed.

UNDERCLOAKING TO OVERHANGING VERGES, ROOFING FELT AND ROOFING TILES HAVING AN ASBESTOS CONTENT:

These items will only be replaced if their condition presents an unnecessary risk or when the property is re-roofed.

INTERNAL PANELS HAVING AN ASBESTOS CONTENT:

These take the form of bath, wall, ceiling and door panels. They have mainly been used for fire protection. Much of this panelling is associated with central heating systems and has been dealt with previously in this document. Bath panels are replaced when a bath is renewed or the panel becomes damaged. Other internal panels will be dealt with in accordance with the priority categorisation.

VINYL FLOOR TILES AND COVERINGS HAVING AN ASBESTOS CONTENT:

These items are only replaced as and when repairs become necessary, otherwise they are left in situ.

FLUE PIPES TO WATER HEATERS:

These consist of asbestos cement pipes leading from the heater which commonly vent into the loft space. Most have been installed privately. The flue and heaters will be removed when each vacant home is being prepared for re-letting. If a flue pipe is damaged within a property which is occupied the tenant will be advised on appropriate action.

HEAT PROTECTION ROPE:

This is asbestos rope provided as heat protection to concrete floor slabs where a heater flue pipe passes through the slab. This material is very difficult to remove in a satisfactory manner, and presents no measurable risk to health under normal circumstances. The material will be cut out when the asbestos cement flue pipe is removed, or, work is carried on to an adjoining or supporting item, or otherwise, an equally effective course of action taken.

FIRE STOPS:

The existence of fire stops in buildings is often hard to establish. Under normal circumstances they present no measurable risk to health. The materials will be removed and replaced with an appropriate fire prevention material if and when work becomes necessary because of changes in fire regulations, or, work is carried on to an adjoining or supporting it.

Race and Diversity Impact Assessment (RDIA)



Name of the service: Asbestos Policy

Directorate: The Trust as a Whole

a. Preparation

The work on this section should be done in advance and be used as part of your RDIA. Please attach any examples of currently available monitoring information, research and consultation reports you may have.

1. Do you have monitoring data available on the number of people who are using or impacted upon by your policy?
- | | Yes | No |
|---|--------------------------|----|
| • Number of people with disabilities | <input type="checkbox"/> | X |
| • Black and minority ethnic communities | <input type="checkbox"/> | X |
| • Women and men | <input type="checkbox"/> | X |
| • People with a hearing impairment | <input type="checkbox"/> | X |
| • People with a sight impairment | <input type="checkbox"/> | X |
| • People with reading difficulties | <input type="checkbox"/> | X |
| • People with a mobility impairment | <input type="checkbox"/> | X |
| • People in the 16 -24 age group | <input type="checkbox"/> | X |
| • Families with children | <input type="checkbox"/> | X |
2. If monitoring has NOT been undertaken, will this be done in future?
- | | Yes | No |
|--|--------------------------|----|
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | X |

If so, specify the arrangements you intend to make; if not, please give a reason for you decision:

Such an in-depth knowledge of customer base is not required. Monitoring data is available for staff members.

b. Your Service

1. What is the main purpose of the service?

To provide a policy safeguarding the protection of staff members and anyone affected by the Trust's work against exposure to airborne asbestos fibres.

2. List the areas of activity of the service, e.g. HR recruitment might have:- advertising, interviewing, short listing etc. as activity areas.

Trade staff cutting, drilling, sawing, or demolishing any materials that could contain asbestos. Non-domestic premises covered by the regulations (including domestic premises when staff are working there)

3. Who are the main beneficiaries of the service?

Staff members who could come into contact with asbestos containing materials. Anyone else who could be affected by the work the Trust undertakes where asbestos containing materials are concerned.

4. In your view, does the service assist customers in meeting their most basic needs, i.e. shelter and income?

Yes

No

5. What number of people may be affected by the service?

unknown

6. Are you expecting to make any changes to the service which may impact on minority groups during the coming year?

Yes

No

7. If you are planning changes how will they impact on any minority groups?

N/A

c. The Impact

1. Complete the following tables using ticks.

Where you think that the service could have a Negative impact on any of our customer groups, i.e. it could disadvantage them
 Where you think that the service could have a Positive impact
 Where you think that the service could have a Neutral impact

- a) Does the service affect men and women in different ways, e.g. flexible working arrangements might have a positive impact on women with caring responsibilities

Gender	Positive impact	Negative impact	Neutral	Reason
Women	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	Asbestos fibres do not discriminate between sex or sexual orientation
Men	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	Everyone can be affected but it is unknown as to how
Lesbians, Gay Men, Bisexuals or Transsexuals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	much exposure is likely to cause health problems and how much is not.

- b) Do people from different black and minority ethnic communities use Trust services differently, e.g. will women from certain minority communities communicate more easily if same sex interviewing arrangements are in place?

Race	Positive impact	Negative impact	Neutral	Reason
White British	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	Asbestos fibres do not discriminate between race either. Everyone is likely to be affected if the policy was not in place.
White Irish	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	
White Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	
Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	
Asian Indian	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	

- c) How will the service impact on people with disabilities, e.g. if information about rechargeable repairs is not made available in large print or alternative formats, customers with a visual impairment or learning disability may not understand their liability.

Disability	Positive impact	Negative impact	Neutral	Reason
Visually impaired	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bumping into and/or damaging asbestos can lead to further exposure.
Hearing impairment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	
Physical impairment	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Smokers and persons with lung diseases are more likely to suffer from the effects of exposure
Learning disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	
Mental health problem	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	

2. a) Could you minimise or remove any negative impact that is of low significance? Yes No
 Explain how
Gender: N/A
Race: N/A
Disability: N/A
- b) Could you improve the positive impact? Yes No
 Explain how
Gender: N/A
Race: N/A
Disability: N/A
3. If there is no evidence that the service promotes equality, equal opportunities, or improved relations, could it be adapted so that it does? Yes No
 Explain how
Gender: N/A
Race: N/A
Disability: N/A
4. As a result of this Impact Assessment, what is the impact of your service on the equality target groups? Low Medium High

Completed
by:
Date:

I. Hilditch

24.09.2008
