

APPENDIX N

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

LANDLORD SERVICES PARTNERSHIP SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP

19 JUNE 2008

EXECUTIVE - 8 JULY 2008

Title:

ASBESTOS POLICY (HOUSING STOCK & RELATED ASSETS)

[Portfolio Holder for Housing: Cllr R J Gates]

[Wards Affected - All]

Summary and purpose:

To update our current asbestos policy following recent changes in legislation and working practise.

Environmental implications:

As a result of the measures we put in place some four years ago, we are regularly asked for guidance on asbestos matters both from tenants and members of the public. Our guidance ensures that, if followed, no-one's health is put at risk. The material is removed, handled and transported carefully and that it is disposed of in a licensed landfill site.

Social / community implications:

We have given comprehensive advice for nearly four years, via a booklet, our web pages, a dedicated telephone helpline and regular features in Waverley Homes. This has enabled tenants to check and reassure themselves that their home is a safe place and free of hazards. We are now also providing a free asbestos removal service (1 year trial) for those tenants wishing to carry out approved improvements to their home.

This demonstrates our very serious commitment to the health and safety of our tenants. It also avoids our tenants having to use perhaps dubious or unproven contractors, which can sometimes lead to fly-tipping in the borough.

E-Government implications:

Asbestos guidance is provided for tenants via the website.

Resource and legal implications:

Within various legislation including the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006 and Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 the Housing Department are required to manage the risk from asbestos. This Asbestos Policy identifies how we are achieving and proposing to achieve this.

Background

The first Housing Maintenance Asbestos Policy was prepared in 2000. Attached at Annexe 1 is the latest revision for approval.

The following is a summary of the changes form the current policy:

1.	<p>In November 2006 the new Control of Asbestos Regulations were introduced. This changed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Works on textured decorative coatings (Artex) were downgraded from licensed works to unlicensed works.❑ Asbestos training & refresher training is now included in the CAR 2006 regulations.❑ There were key changes in the way hazards are counted and measured
2.	<p>We have now included detailed guidelines for asbestos work in connection with Tenant Improvements. See pages 13 to 15.</p>
3.	<p>To assist tenants in carrying out improvements we have offered to both manage and remove asbestos directly affected by the works free of charge (this is a one year trial). See Note 'A' on page 15.</p>
4.	<p>This review now reflects the recent changes in the corporate management structure at Waverley and the change in title of some key officers.</p>
5.	<p>Whilst we have had asbestos information on the Waverley website for some three and a half years. Following the recent changes in the design of Waverley's website, the asbestos team are taking this opportunity to review and update where necessary the information presented. This should be completed by July 2008.</p>
6.	<p>'Asbestos in the Home' was originally published in November 2004, in light of some of the changes shown above we need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Modify the downloadable version of the booklet, which is available as an electronic pdf file❑ Fix correction stickers to those printed copies still remaining in stock.
7.	<p>As well as the text in the live pages on the website and the downloadable 'Asbestos in the Home' booklet we anticipate creating some new pdf guidance leaflets. They may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Alterations & home improvements❑ General painting and decorating❑ Preparation & painting of textured decorative coatings (Artex)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Removal of cement sheets from tenant's own shed or garage ❑ Cleaning of leaves & debris from asbestos corrugated roof sheets <p>We hope to have some of these available from the website by October 2008</p>
8.	Some of the web-based leaflets detailed above will also be summarised and featured in our publication 'Waverley Homes' throughout the year.
9.	<p>With the introduction of the new single asbestos register it will give us opportunities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Be able to produce a consistent form of Plain English Report direct from the database. ❑ Now update the database with the removal work that has taken place over recent years. At the same time updating the risk assessment where necessary. ❑ Be able to review the risk assessments on a regular basis
10.	<p>With the new single asbestos register comes a new form of Plain English Report. Before we start using this new report throughout the borough we will seek comments and advice from tenants about the wording. We also need to review the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ How the information is presented on the page ❑ Does it need supplementary guidance? ❑ How should it be presented & compiled as a ready source of health and safety information for the home? ❑ How would tenants wish to store or retain this vital information?
11.	We are committed to deliver these reports to our tenants at the earliest opportunity. However, before we can start that we need to update the information on the register to reflect the asbestos works that have taken place since the report was commissioned. This is in hand and will be started once the register is online. We hope to send the register out with other information on 'Hazards in the Home'.
12.	The Landlord Services Partnership SIG considered this report at its meeting on 19 June 2008 and wished to commend it to the Executive.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the updated Asbestos Policy be approved.

Background Papers (SD(CS))

There are no background papers (as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) relating to this report.

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