

# Define<sup>research & insight</sup>



## **Insight research to inform the *Asbestos 2013-14 Campaign***

### **Final Report**

1.11.4.2214. / 2013-14 Campaign

October 2013

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# I Introduction

## A. Research Context

The role of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is to prevent people being killed, injured or made ill by work.

Asbestos-related diseases<sup>1</sup> (ARDs) account for around 4,500 deaths<sup>2</sup> every year and continue to be the single biggest cause of work-related death. Those who are most at-risk are workers who *regularly disturb the fabric of buildings* (putting them at risk of exposure to asbestos); around 1.8 million people across the UK.

Although it is now prohibited as a construction material, the use of asbestos was previously widespread. Therefore it presents an *ongoing danger* to tradespeople who disturb the fabric of buildings in the course of their work. Asbestos could potentially be in all buildings built or refurbished before the year 2000, including industrial, commercial and public buildings and many domestic homes. If asbestos is present and in good condition then it poses little risk to health *if left undisturbed*. However, the asbestos fibres can be breathed in and lodged in the lungs if disturbed, which can later lead to ARDs developing.

In light of this issue, the *Asbestos: Hidden Killer* campaign was launched in 2008, to raise awareness of the present danger posed by asbestos and to help at-risk workers avoid exposure<sup>3</sup>.

Between 2008 and 2010, four phases of *Hidden Killer* were delivered. Post campaign evaluation studies showed it had been highly successful in raising awareness of the dangers posed by asbestos and instilling motivation to change behaviour amongst the target audience. These evaluation studies also showed that to achieve

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<sup>1</sup> There are four main diseases associated with inhalation of asbestos fibres, including two cancers (Mesothelioma and Asbestos related lung cancer) – see <http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/causdis/asbestos.htm> for further details.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/causdis/asbestos.htm>

<sup>3</sup> This campaign was developed using intelligence from research with the Institute for Employment Studies (IES) in 2007: HSE RR58 – Taking risks with asbestos, what influences the behaviour of maintenance workers. <http://www.hse.gov.uk/research/rrhtm/rr558.htm>

sustainable behaviour change there was a strong need for ongoing communication<sup>4</sup>. HSE is therefore planning a new phase of an Asbestos campaign to be delivered during 2013-14.

The campaign objectives are to:

- Support the policy objective to reduce the overall number of tradespeople dying from asbestos-related diseases;
- Inform and educate the target audience that the risk from asbestos is current and relevant to them and the work that they do;
- Encourage the target audience to actively seek information about asbestos and the ways they can protect themselves by undertaking a tailored call to action.<sup>5</sup>

Higher-risk work with asbestos (including most large scale building demolition/refurbishment work and asbestos removal is undertaken by contractors who are licensed to do such work. The target audience for the campaign are all those who are not licensed to undertake work with asbestos, are unprepared to deal with asbestos and are often unknowingly exposed to it as part of their day-to-day work in the construction and maintenance industry<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Asbestos Hidden Killer BMG Evaluation Report 2009 p.6 & 23 (<http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/hiddenkiller/evaluationcoi.pdf>).

<sup>5</sup> Safe working practices vary depending on the task being undertaken and the asbestos containing materials that workers are faced with. For this reason, there are no behaviours that can be easily communicated via a communications campaign that will steadfastly lead to safer working for all.

<sup>6</sup> For a list of occupations that this covers please see table under Sample section.

## B. Summary of Research Requirement and Approach

HSE have not delivered any campaign activity since early 2010 and no further audience insight research has been conducted since the Institute for Employment Studies' report in 2007. In light of this, insight research was required to ensure that new waves of the campaign reflect the current environment and audience needs and, in doing so, have the greatest impact on awareness, attitudes and behaviour.

Two-stage research was therefore commissioned with the following broad aims in mind:

- **Firstly, to identify audience barriers and drivers** to taking action to protect themselves against asbestos
- **Secondly, to support development of the communications strategy** to meet its objectives.

### **Desk Research**

Prior to primary research, desk research was conducted using previous findings of past research conducted by HSE on asbestos, other health and safety issues and the previous Hidden Killer campaign. This provided a solid understanding of current knowledge as well as startpoints for stimulus for Stage 1 of the research.

### **Primary Research Stage 1 – Audience insight**

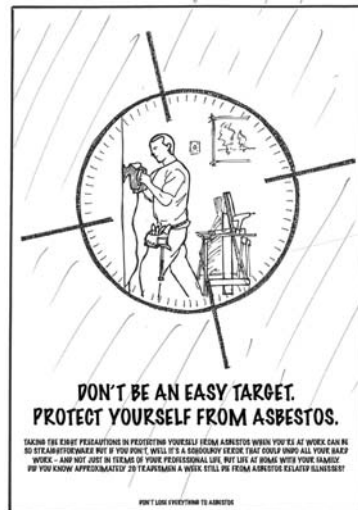
This stage focused on understanding in depth the current audience position in terms of barriers and drivers towards protection against asbestos. Research used a range of stimulus to prompt exploratory discussion and conversation on the topic area. It also looked at a number of potential messages, call to actions and messengers.

### **Primary Research Stage 2 – Communication needs**

Based on insight from stage 1, a core proposition was developed:

***You are risking your life and your livelihood if you do not take appropriate precautions to protect against asbestos on every job.***

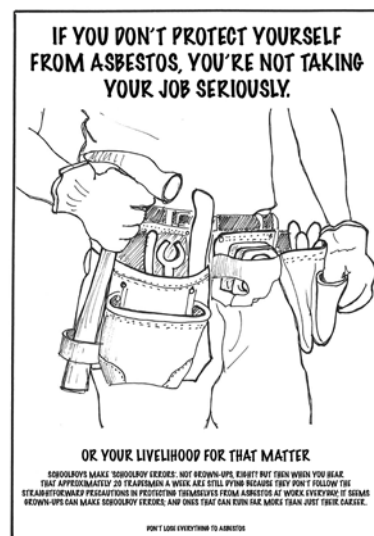
This proposition was used to develop **four potential approaches to the campaign**. These were tested in the research as adcepts, in order to understand which approach and lead messages had the most potential to overcome audience barriers and motivate regular and appropriate action to protect against the asbestos risk:



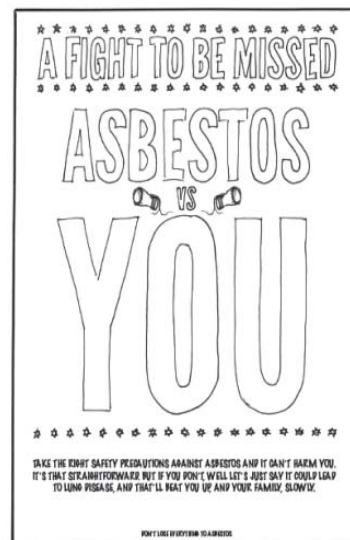
1. Target



2. Hard Work



3. Job Seriously



4. Fight

Alternative strap-lines, additional messages and a range of potential campaign content were also tested (including information and pictures about asbestos risk locations, HSE's *Asbestos Essentials*, Information videos, App concepts and written and filmed case studies).

## C. Research Aims and Objectives

The overarching objective for the research was:

**To develop an up-to-date and in-depth understanding of the target audience's<sup>7</sup> attitudes and behaviours in relation to asbestos and working with it and provide clear recommendations to inform communications with the target audience.**

In order to achieve this overall objective, the research was split into two iterative stages, each with a distinct subset of objectives.

### Stage 1 - Audience Insight

**Stage 1 was an *exploratory stage*, which was focussed on gaining a robust understanding of the target audience's current mindset/behaviours in relation to asbestos. This involved addressing the following detailed objectives:**

- Understand the different barriers (both rational and emotional) to taking action to protect themselves amongst the target audience. For example:
  - Awareness
  - Understanding
  - Perception of relevance
  - Immediacy of issue
  - Embarrassment about taking action
  - Levels of trust in 'messenger'
  - Having time to take action
  - Capability
  - Access to information
  
- Understand the different drivers (both rational and emotional) to taking action to protect themselves amongst the target audience. For example:
  - Relevant statistics

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<sup>7</sup> The target audience is those working in trades where exposure to asbestos may occur. More details are in the method and sample.



- Facts/information/messages that induce an emotional response
  - The 'messenger'
  - 'Normalisation' of taking action
  - Suggestions for 'how to'
- Identify any key insight(s) that could drive the approach to the campaign and help to lever action, for example:
    - Starting conversations
    - Keeping your other half happy
    - Providing information as part of working day
    - Myth busting
    - Understand how the customer messaging/journey can be refined to maximise cut through, engagement and behavioural impact in line with both reducing exposure and taking steps for protection from exposure
- Understand how learning from the research impacts on the following:
    - Targeting
    - Messaging
    - Tone
    - 'Messengers' and channels
    - Executional ideas
    - Wording and vernacular

## **Stage 2 – Communication Needs**

Based on the insights from Stage 1, the key objective of Stage 2 was to understand the audience's response to a range of messages and ideas in order to make recommendations for a communication strategy that would drive the audience to take action. The following detailed objectives were addressed:

- Understand response to four concepts and strap-lines including:
  - Which elements work well/less well (rationally and emotionally) to induce a nudge for the audience to consider changing their behaviour
  - Messaging – what are the most effective messages that should be included? What adjustments/additions/support might be required to reduce fall out or rejection?

- Tone – what are the key considerations around tone? What tone is most likely to deliver messages that drive action?
- Wording and vernacular – what should be the main principles guiding development of language and phrasing? Are there any particular high/low impact words that should be used/avoided? How can understanding be maximised?
- Understand response to potential content areas for the campaign including:
  - Key protective behaviours: understand reaction to five key protective behaviours<sup>8</sup> and likelihood of adopting these? Are there ways in which these can be usefully disseminated? Get a sense of the current levels of awareness of these actions pre campaign to help tracking
  - Common materials containing asbestos: how useful is it to present these to the audience?
  - Case studies/film case studies: understand response and role of case studies, providing guidelines as to which work best
  - Apps: understand current usage of apps as well as key needs of the audience for an app in relation to asbestos and protection
  - Response to asbestos safety kit: audience expectations and response to initial ideas
  - ‘Messengers’ and partners: impact of proposed partners on communications and receipt of information by target audience
  - Call to action: what would the audience be willing and able to do? What makes sense to them?

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<sup>8</sup> Key protective actions tested were: 1. Never use power tools, 2. Keep materials damp, but not too wet, 3. Wear properly fitted suitable mask, 4. Clean up with damp cloth, never a brush and 5. Double bag and label waste. There are no behaviours that will steadfastly lead to safe working for all but workers adopting these behaviours will be taking some suitable protections and will be able to understand some of the actions required of them.

## D. Method and Sample

### Method

The research used a mixed methodology of depths, pairs and mini-groups structured across two stages of research. At Stage 1, the focus was on gaining detailed understanding of personal barriers and drivers to action, and the methodology reflected this need, being comprised of depths and paired depths. At Stage 2, insight to the individualised response was gained through depth interviews, and the social response was also gathered via mini-groups. Stage 1 research contained respondents from a range of different size of organisations including large organisations. For Stage 2, respondents were drawn from micro businesses and sole traders as these have been identified as the workers most at risk from asbestos.

Respondents were also pre-tasked at both stages, although the content differed. At Stage 1 the pre-task comprised of a short set of questions to prompt respondents to consider risk and hazard in their jobs as well as their current media usage. These questions were also asked of respondents at Stage 2, but in addition, those with Smartphones were asked about their current usage of apps and iPhone-user only respondents were requested to download, test and answer questions on an asbestos related app<sup>9</sup>.

### Sample

The total sample of 64 respondents was split across the two stages of research. The list of at-risk trades was divided into occupation clusters to ensure good representation of each trade overall.

Stage 1 (= 30 respondents)		Units	
Audience		Depths (14)	Paired Depths (8)
Occupation cluster	<i>Cluster 1</i>	8	5
	<i>Cluster 2</i>	5	2
	<i>Cluster 3</i>	1	1
Length of time in	<i>Under 5 years</i>	7	4

<sup>9</sup> BPEC Asbestos App

trade	Over 5 years	7	4
<b>Total</b>		<b>14</b>	<b>8</b>

Stage 2 (= 34 respondents)		Units	
Audience		Depths (18)	Mini-groups (4) (3-4 respondents in each) <sup>10</sup>
Occupation cluster	Cluster 1	9	2
	Cluster 2	7	2
	Cluster 3	2	-
Length of time in trade	Under 5 years	9	2 respondents per group
	Over 5 years	9	2 respondents per group
<b>Total</b>		<b>18</b>	<b>4</b>

Cluster	Specific occupations
<b>Cluster 1</b>	Electricians, electrical fitters, carpenters and joiners, plumbers, heating and ventilating engineers, plasterers, skilled construction trades, bricklayers, masons, electrical and electronic engineers,
<b>Cluster 2</b>	Labourers (build and woodworking trades), construction operatives, roofers, roof tilers and slaters, painters and decorators
<b>Cluster 3</b>	Caretakers

**Additional sample criteria at both stages:**

- Thorough spread of roles/specific occupations required within cluster
- All agreed with a statement that they are, as a condition of their job, regularly involved in disturbing the fabric of buildings (including those built or refurbished before the year 2000)
- Good spread of years working in trade (from 1-20+ years)
- Good spread of ages
- SEG falling out naturally against profession
- Good mix of those working alone/with one other/in a team
- Spread of contract type (e.g. casual fixed term, permanent)
- Spread of domestic/commercial property (except caretakers)
- Spread of level of training relating to working with asbestos (but all to be non-licensed to work with asbestos)

<sup>10</sup> In one session, one respondent failed to attend so this was replaced by a depth interview

- Spread of level of awareness of health risks associated with asbestos
- Mix of smokers/non smokers
- Public sector workers to fall out naturally but maximum of 8 overall
- Ethnicity to fall out naturally but to include at least 1-2 ethnic minority (across different trades)
- Gender falling out naturally against profession
- All quotas/spreads are in reference to depth respondents and lead respondents only of paired depths (characteristics of pair to fall out naturally, as long as fits within overall profile)

***Additional sample criteria at Stage 1 only<sup>11</sup>:***

- Good spread of size of employer with following minimums in place:
  - Min 8 sole traders
  - Min 8 working for micro business (1-9 employees)
  - Min 4 working for small business (10-49 employees)
  - Min 4 working for medium/large business (50+ employees)

***Additional sample criteria at Stage 2 only<sup>12</sup>:***

- All were working either as a sole trader or on a site with 15 or less workers
  - Sample included owners (as long as also working on site) as well as those employed
- Half of sample had and used a Smartphone
- None to currently protect themselves against asbestos regularly i.e. might do if 'known' to be present but generally not top of mind

For Stage 1, fieldwork took place between 9-17 January, in the following locations: Edinburgh, Bridgend, London, Manchester, Southampton and Nottingham.

At Stage 2, fieldwork took place between 10 - 25 April, in the following locations: Glasgow, Cardiff, Oldham, Birmingham, Thatcham (near Reading) and London.

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<sup>11</sup> The first stage included a range of different sized businesses to understand the differences between larger and smaller organizations.

<sup>12</sup> The definition of micro business was adjusted slightly in the second stage of research to reflect the typical size of a small construction company. It was also considered that this audience would be the key target for this strand of the campaign.

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## II Conclusions & Recommendations

### Stage 1 - Audience Insight

#### 1. Connection to the issue

- There was broad knowledge of the danger of asbestos and respondents were generally aware of the importance of not disturbing or working with it. This level of knowledge gave an overall sense of current control and safety in relation to the issues, with important implications for their barriers and drivers to action.
- Firstly, the audience typically assume, or know, that asbestos is a (very) dangerous substance and is best avoided. In fact, there are no real awareness issues around the health risk posed per se. However, there is a fairly extensive variation in terms of what detail is known.
- Respondents talk about having measures currently in place to avoid exposure to asbestos, variously including:
  - Making sure they do not work on areas/materials/property where asbestos is present:
    - because they have conducted a risk assessment (more amongst those employed in larger companies)
    - because they have been told it is not present (e.g. by foreman or employer)
    - because they have decided it is not present
  - Taking what they consider to be appropriate steps to dealing with asbestos (minority of small businesses/sole traders)
  - Calling in (or at least being willing to call in) licensed contractors to remove it as required.

#### 2. Barriers

- There were significant awareness issues leading to a strong perception that asbestos risk was not relevant to them personally. There was evidence also of a lack of appropriate behaviour on site relating to the asbestos risk. Looking at how

the risk of asbestos is assessed it was clear that for a good range of respondents their assessment of both appropriate measures and position of relative safety (versus risk of exposure) was wrong.

- There were also specific behaviour issues. Where risk was assessed more accurately, protective practice was not always undertaken appropriately or safely.
- Barriers impacting on target audience attitudes and behaviours sit under two broad areas and span six key themes:
  - *Awareness issues around relevance*
    - exposure to asbestos is not a risk for me and my work
    - I do not think there is a personal health risk
  - *Disempowerment issues around facilitation*
    - it is not my responsibility to check or take action in my work (especially those in larger companies)
    - the opportunity cost of checking or taking action is too high (especially those in micro companies and sole traders)
    - there is a lack of clear understanding about what needs to be done to mitigate the risk ('how to')
    - there are emotional and practical barriers regarding PPE
- The first barrier, the low awareness of occupational relevance (*exposure to asbestos is not a risk for me and my work*) and the low perceived health relevance (*I do not think there is a personal health risk*) were both identified as key barriers reducing preventative action. These barriers were very much linked and evident across the audience. For these barriers, this stage highlighted that the communication challenge will be to increase the universal awareness of risk.
- Additional barriers relating to responsibility and opportunity cost will need to be tackled via communications aimed more at facilitating employees to take action and boosting micro company worker/sole trader to have responsibility for taking action.
- Barriers relating to the lack of 'how to' and wearing/using PPE, will need to be mitigated via communications that educate on what actions can be taken and further, that *normalise* those actions amongst the audience as a whole.



- For those connected to the issue and currently taking action, all barriers discussed above had been overcome. However, there was evidence that even so, not all were carrying out the correct procedures. There is therefore still a need to emphasise the risk that asbestos poses, educate on the 'how to' and normalise these behaviours, both of which should boost micro company and sole trader responsibility and/or help facilitate (correct) employee action.
- Research found that a hypothesised audience behaviour journey: **Stop → Plan → Protect**, would be likely to have some engagement issues with this audience. Based on the current audience position in terms of awareness levels, and how they are typically approaching the issue, it is likely that a revised journey along the lines of: **Understand personal risk → Double check → Ask/Plan → Protect**, is likely to be more effective.

### 3. Drivers

- The drivers were identified in direct correlation to the barriers outlined above. In summary these included:
  - Making the issue relevant (i.e. the building they work on may contain asbestos)
  - Making the health risk relevant (i.e. the impact asbestos could make to their health)
  - Driving responsibility to take action
  - Reducing opportunity cost of taking action
  - Providing an accurate 'how to'
  - Empowering the audience to use PPE
- In terms of additional drivers, the research identified that this audience were also sensitive to wider benefits and rewards for taking action. For example there was a strong desire to reduce fear in relation to the asbestos risk and also to avoid guilt relating to how developing an ARD would impact on their roles as fathers, husbands and income-earners.

## Stage 2 - Communication Needs

### 1. Core communication principles

- Some principles emerged from response to the materials providing a useful checklist for developing communications with this audience:
  - **'Instant' accessibility**
    - messaging needs to be straightforward, direct and to the point – complex/compound sentences and thoughts are easily missed
    - the total amount of copy also needs to be short and 'at a glance' – almost enough to be able to read incidentally rather than deliberately
  - **'Adult to adult' tone and language**
    - this means that it is likely to have greater impact as something communicated tonally as 'man to man' rather than coming from a "builder caricature" or from an official source
  - **Lead messages must focus on new, news**
    - any lead messages that are already known (e.g. 'asbestos is dangerous' or 'you need to protect yourself') will allow the audience to disconnect with the issue
    - messages containing 'old news' have reduced cut through and in addition push the audience to a space of 'I know' rather than interrupting their complacency
  - Messaging also needs to **avoid asking them a question which they might answer unhelpfully**, e.g. *do you know how to deal with asbestos?* This risks putting audience into space of 'I know' versus prompting them to reconsider their current behaviour.

### 2. Recommended creative approach

- The research highlighted that campaign messaging needs to work to achieve two messaging goals :

- **Goal 1:** To *raise awareness of the relevance of the asbestos risk* in day-to-day work. Without this, the audience does not listen or engage and it is likely to be difficult to move them forward.
- **Goal 2:** To *trigger key emotional drivers around loss aversion* (in relation to quality of life and livelihood). With this element, motivation to act is likely to be substantially reinforced.
- The research indicates that the ‘Target’ approach (with an adjusted headline) is the route that best fulfils the communications requirement to achieve Goal 1. It has a strong risk focus and has universal relevance which will help to effectively interrupt complacency. Supported by the message that *Asbestos is still around and where you wouldn’t expect it* which reinforces the fact that it is relevant to them.
- This could work very effectively with either of the following lead messages:

***On average 20 tradesmen a week still die early from asbestos related diseases. Fact.***

Or

***Asbestos can be present in any building built or refurbished before the year 2000 and remains in millions of domestic and commercial buildings today.***

- This could be supported by:

***Taking the right safety precautions in your day to day work is easy/easier than you think.***

- Where possible, the following message should also be included for maximum impact. ‘Don’t lose everything’ is an addition that will have value if included where possible.

***And if you don’t, you too could get lung disease or asbestos related cancer – which will damage your livelihood/more than just your work life. Don’t lose everything to asbestos.***

- The recommendation to deliver Goal 2 is to do so through development of the supporting copy. In addition, the audience would benefit from simultaneous communications comprising of short, sharp reminders of loss they want to avoid. This could be communicated via other collateral or through PR activity.

### 3. Strap-line

- The strap-line that had the most potential to instigate change by working on attitudinal and behavioural norms were:

***Think asbestos, first job, every job***

These lines help to normalise the behaviour (as a check that they should be doing on every job). Developing this further and based on insight from the strap-lines tested, a potential strapline could be:

***Every job – think asbestos (and be safe)***

The strap-line ***“Don’t lose everything to asbestos”*** was also powerful and could potentially work well as a key message to reinforce the consequences of their behaviour.

### 4. Secondary messages

- The research has also shown that there are a number of secondary messages that are also likely to be highly effective to use within any future communications, where the opportunity might arise. These include messages relating to:
  - **Scale of risk:** the key importance here is demonstrating to the audience:
    - where asbestos is
    - common materials that contain asbestos
    - and how they might be exposed (via different tasks)
  - **Levels of risk:** this would include facts or figures which demonstrate the level of risk to help further cut through complacency
  - **Responsibility:** these are messages likely to act as useful reminders that individuals in this audience need to consider the risk *themselves*, rather than remain passive and rely on others. There is also the need to

communicate that employers are also responsible for ensuring health and safety is adhered to.

- **'Key preventative actions'**: these will have value providing the initial 'how to', but it will also be important to set these in context by framing 'when' they are relevant and should be taken and what else sits alongside them to ensure appropriate protection.

## 5. Other considerations

### • Call to action

- In terms of call to action, this sample mainly indicated interest in picking up a free information kit. For those with smart phones, however, downloading an app was often also considered of interest to have to hand.
- There was some interest in accessing information on the Internet but for others this was considered high effort.
- Referencing *Asbestos Essentials* within the kit or app may prompt consideration of purchase or download. However, indications are that there is generally lower interest in this overall.

### • Other content

- Provision of visuals/information of 'where' asbestos is and what asbestos containing materials look like were also considered helpful as well as videos/information providing them with user-friendly information on how to handle it. This was expected in either the kit or as part of the app.

### • Case studies

- There was evidence that case study content, especially videos, do have some impact.
- However, for this audience there was a low impetus to read/watch case study content of their own volition and so they are likely to need to be 'pushed' towards this.

- There is potential for using some short case studies within a kit (rather than within the app, for which there was less interest) but level of content would be a testimonial/sound-bite only for greatest impact.

- **Channels**

- A variety of suitable channels were mentioned but using trade stores and other trade touch points, are likely to be key in delivering this campaign.
- Radio was also considered as a potential effective way to communicate messages as this was often listened to whilst working.
- Messages in print (e.g. newspapers) were also thought to have some value.
- There is also an opportunity to push messages and debunk myths via PR (e.g. trade magazine and newspapers).

- **Messengers**

- HSE was considered a relevant and suitable messenger for these types of messages.
- Other messengers and channels also considered appropriate were trade partners and daily newspapers.
- Family spokespeople were considered less credible in delivering factual information about asbestos, but could potentially be used to reinforce loss aversion messages.
- The use of celebrity spokespeople is less likely to have traction with this audience.

\* \* \* \* \*

## III Detailed Findings

### 1. Stage 1 - Audience Insight

#### 1.1 Key Audience Differences

##### 1.1.1 Attitude and mindset

Across the sample as a whole, some differences emerged relating to awareness, perception of risk and emotional response to the asbestos issue. These differences could be broadly clustered by size of company, trade and age/life-stage:

- **Company size:** although sole traders and employees of micro businesses (<.c.10 employees) tended to have similar levels of awareness and perceptions regarding asbestos to larger companies, there was a significant difference in their sense of control and ability to take protective action. Employees of larger companies tended to be more reliant on the prevailing work culture and the action or inaction of their employers, whilst sole traders and micro businesses largely determined their own work practices and operations.
- **Trade:** there was a perception amongst some types of tradesmen that given the nature of their work they were comparatively at very low risk of asbestos exposure. For example, painters and decorators and, to some extent, plasterers too, were less engaged with the issue overall.
- **Age and life-stage:** these factors were significant in shaping the emotional response to the issue and what benefits were likely to be sought via a change in behaviour. For example, those with families were more likely to be motivated by messages that prompted fear and guilt relating to their role as a father, husband and income-earner. Older respondents, who were concerned they may have already been exposed to the asbestos, could 'tune out' of messages on health risk. However, some of these individuals were still motivated by maintaining status in their professional lives, which included being a role model to younger colleagues.

### 1.1.2 Current protective behaviours

Across the sample a range of protective behaviours were reported; all respondents claimed they would change their behaviour to some degree if asbestos was on site. There was evidence that some effective ('approved') measures were being taken, but also that more ineffective ('common sense') protective techniques were being used.

Generally, there was a strong aversion to working with asbestos, if its presence could be verified. Doing so was considered a job for specialist contractors – a perception that added to the sense that dealing with it would be 'high effort'. Many respondents said they would refuse to work on the site, they would call in specialists to deal with it, and only return once it had been removed.

Those who said they had continued working on the site with a verified asbestos presence detailed a number of protective behaviours that had been deployed. Some claimed to have *avoided* the asbestos material; they had managed to work elsewhere on site (for example, in another room or part of the building), or had been able to work on site at a different time to those dealing directly with the asbestos.

Others reported altering their work practice, including either turning their head away from any dust created, or avoiding the normal preparatory sanding/drilling before painting.

Finally, some mentioned wearing a mask (usually a dust mask only), and some others also claimed to have worn a suit and special respirator to work with asbestos. Some protective behaviours such as dampening/wetting asbestos, pulling down asbestos material rather than smashing it up, double-bagging waste and using an appropriate vacuum cleaner were also mentioned.

*"A couple years ago we were told to remove some by our site manager. But we wore full PPE, things over our boots, full face mask and gloves. We also had to double bag it and seal it with tape"*

[Bricklayer, Manchester]

*"I was working on a job a couple of years ago, and there was actually soffit boards on these bungalows that were built in 1952. And I spotted straight away that they were asbestos, and basically I said to them don't rub it down just get the cobwebs off it and paint it, simple as that"*

[Decorator, Midlands]



### 1.1.3 Training

Overall there were low levels of formal training on asbestos reported. 'Training' had taken place in four ways:

- College training (recalled by those more recently out of college but confidence in knowledge was low)
- Formal training (for those in larger companies)
- 'Toolbox talks' (a briefing or chat with site manager before commencing work)
- On the job learning or word of mouth between peers

Awareness or use of *Asbestos Essentials* was low, with none spontaneously recalling it as a resource or training manual.

*"There was a three week module dedicated to it in college"*  
[Heating Engineer, Edinburgh]

*"I remember having an asbestos awareness briefing at college"*  
[Bricklayer, Manchester]

*"It's mainly just on the job learning, word of mouth. But I do read construction magazines, and have been on CITB courses"*  
[Plasterer, Manchester]

*"I worked with it on a job a few years ago, so I know what it looks like"*  
[Joiner, Manchester]

## 1.2 Barriers

This section details the six key barriers that act to prevent the target audience from taking action to protect themselves from asbestos at work. Some of these beliefs were held more strongly by certain sub-segments of the audience; these differences will be highlighted where relevant.

### 1.2.1 Key Barrier 1: Exposure to asbestos is not a risk for me in my work

This barrier is broadly about the perception across the target audience that the issue *lacks relevance* to them in their jobs and their lives. This view was evident amongst all those currently not engaging with the issue or taking action. There were a number

of different ways in which this *lack of relevance* was articulated or justified by respondents:

***'It's not in the places I work'***

Respondents generally had some preconceptions around the types of building and locations that asbestos might be found. However, because this knowledge tended to be either piecemeal or inaccurate, it acted as a barrier to action. So, despite there being different levels of awareness across the sample, the conclusion that was often drawn was that 'asbestos is not present in the places I work'.

In terms of what was known then; most respondents had a concept of what a 'high risk' asbestos location might be. Suggestions included: industrial buildings, 'old' buildings, schools, council buildings/houses and old hospitals. Respondents were also able to identify key risk areas within buildings, such as ceilings, roofs and walls, boilers and insulating materials. However, the 'gaps' in knowledge around risk areas were significant.

For example, none in the sample seriously considered buildings built in the 1980s or 90s as a likely place for asbestos to be found. Even those who were aware that some forms of asbestos continued to be used in the '90's, did not readily associate buildings from this era with having an asbestos risk. In addition, domestic spaces were typically considered low risk buildings, as asbestos was felt to be more closely associated with industrial, commercial or municipal environments. Finally, outdoors work-locations were generally seen as low risk both in terms of finding asbestos, but also in terms of the specific risk posed. Improved ventilation outside was thought to mitigate any health and safety risk if asbestos was found to be present.

*"Most of our work is on newish buildings"*

[Plasterer, Bridgend, Wales]

*"In domestic you don't really come across it"*

[Plumber, Southampton]

*"If I'm in older properties that's the only real time I'll think there could be asbestos about, but if I'm in something post 1960s it doesn't even come into my mind, cause I know it's not here"*

[Painter/decorator, Bridgend, Wales]

*“On a day to day job you’re not coming into the position where you need to be that well protected – the mask maybe but not the whole suit “*  
[Painter/decorator, Bridgend, Wales]

*“It’s in the back of your mind, but it’s more roof and ceiling related”*  
[Plasterer, Bridgend, Wales]

*“Unless you were bringing down a wall or something, I don’t think the risk is that high”*  
[Bricklayer, Manchester]

### ***‘It’s not a risk anymore’***

For most respondents there was a strong sense that the *current* risk posed by asbestos was low or negligible, regardless of the building type or any other risk factor.

This perception was based on the knowledge that asbestos had been widely used in the early to middle parts of the 20th century and had affected many tradesmen who had worked at that time. Stories about members of the older generation having been exposed to asbestos and suffering later on in life were familiar to many respondents. It was also typically mentioned that those exposed had not known the danger it posed to them at the time.

Awareness of these stories did, in some cases, prompt consideration of the seriousness of exposure. However, the stronger takeout was that asbestos was ‘a problem of the past’, resulting from both corporate and worker ignorance and low health and safety standards at the time. There was an implicit sense that the reasons asbestos had been a problem in the past were no longer applicable, a view compounded by the general lack of current communications about the issue (especially perceived amongst the younger respondents). Given the perception that it is now ‘old news’ that asbestos is a health hazard, and in a culture where health and safety is taken more seriously, the conclusion that was often drawn was that the issue must have been ‘sorted out’ and that if it really was a continuing risk, then they would have heard something more about it.

*“I’d say 99% of its gone”*  
[Electrician, London]

*“I don’t really think about it that much. Because it’s not really that much now, it’s sort of a 70s thing”*  
[Plumber, Southampton]

*"A lot of the properties that had asbestos will have been pulled down...a lot of the asbestos is gone"*

[Painter/decorator, Bridgend, Wales]

### ***'I don't make much dust or work around much dust'***

It was generally perceived that asbestos becomes a health risk when it is disturbed, broken or otherwise turned to dust. This led many tradesmen in the sample to conclude that they were not at risk if they felt they did not typically work on-site at the point when lots of dust was being created. This attitude was heard mostly from plasterers and painters and decorators.

*"This is not as relevant to us, as if you had two builders here...because it's not our job to take it apart - we don't disturb it - just to paint it"*

[Painter/decorator, Bridgend, Wales]

### ***'Other types of tradesmen get ill'***

Beyond a lack of connection with dusty work environments as detailed above, many respondents did just not consider *their particular trade* to be one in which exposure to asbestos was likely. Most did not have any personal or anecdotal experience of someone in their line of work having suffered from ARD, and concluded therefore that it must be 'others' who needed to take protective action.

*"Because it's such a new building, and I'm not really rummaging around in the attic and snapping... I heard that if you snap asbestos it releases all the whatever... I reckon it's more to do with people like removal people"*

[Caretaker, Bridgend, Wales]

## 1.2.2 Key Barrier 2: Denial of personal health risk/won't happen to me

This barrier is also to do with audience perception of low relevance, but in relation to health risk specifically. There were a range of health related beliefs and issues evident amongst the target audience which cluster under four main areas. Typically these beliefs were not universal across the sample, but individuals were likely to adhere to one or two, which was enough to reduce motivation to take action.

***'It's so long until you find out and suffer the consequence, it feels irrelevant to now'***

The idea that ARDs emerge after a significant lag time was frequently known. There are indications that this knowledge went some way to creating a sense of helplessness and lack of ability to control or manage the asbestos risk. Unlike other risks and hazards, where the danger is more apparent and the physical effects clear and immediate (for example pain, bruising, swelling etc.), the 'invisible' impact of asbestos reduced respondents' sense of being able to take proportionate and effective action when needed.

*"It's like a silent killer. It's up there with electrics, but it's less obvious, it takes time"*

[Bricklayer, Manchester]

*"I know that it takes a while for it to be diagnosed – you can't tell who's got it until late on"*

[Electrician, Manchester]

In addition, the prospect of potentially suffering consequences thirty years in the future meant that more immediate risks and pressures were often prioritised. Respondents often mentioned the constant and pressing need to earn an income in order to support themselves or a family, and how this often superseded health and safety protocols.

*"They think it's gonna come out, if it comes out, in 30-40 years"*

[Electrician, London]

*"It can take up to 40 years to have an affect"*

[Heating engineer, Edinburgh]

*"I suppose asbestos is a risk, but when you've got something steaming past at head height you're thoughts are elsewhere!"*

[Bricklayer, Manchester]

***'A small amount of exposure doesn't pose a significant health risk'***

There were some examples amongst those with some level of existing knowledge, of counter-narratives that undermined the seriousness of the asbestos risk. The idea that low levels of exposure had a negligible impact or that the likelihood of becoming ill was related to chance, or other factors beyond one's control, all worked as significant barriers to action.

*"But like that guy was telling me it's all kind of phony, cause he used to watch his granddad sanding it, and he lived to a ripe age."*

[Plasterer, London]

*"Some people can breathe in asbestos and it never affects them, they live to 100... it's a hidden thing, you're not going to feel unhealthy until you've got it"*

[Bricklayer, Bridgend Wales]

*"They think oh six holes ain't gonna hurt them...two fags ain't gonna hurt you, two drinks ain't gonna hurt you, that type of thing"*

[Electrician, London]

***'I don't know what the consequences are'***

There was a general awareness amongst the audience that asbestos could cause some serious and unpleasant health consequences. However, there were significant gaps in knowledge, especially amongst the younger respondents, but also across the audience as a whole in terms of the details and the reality of ARDs. For example, some were not aware of the link to cancer and a minority knew nothing about the specific consequences of exposure (beyond a general sense that it was bad and relatively debilitating).

Knowledge around health consequences was often drawn from word of mouth, and where individuals had simply not come across these stories or cases, the perception of outcomes was much less graphic than the reality.

*"You're working around asbestos, but no one really gets injured by it"*

[Labourer, Midlands]

*"I worked with a guy when I was 20, he was 60 and he grew up doing it, and he was telling me about the disease they get from their lungs crystallizing..."*  
 [Plasterer, London]

*"Isn't it bad when you take in the fumes from asbestos?"*  
 [Labourer, Midlands]

***'Personal health is a bit of a lottery anyway'***

The idea that one's health or ill-health is outside one's personal control, was often discussed by respondents. That one could engage in a range of known healthy and unhealthy behaviours, with little actual impact on your state of health (for example, living to 100 years old after a lifetime of smoking, or dying from cancer in your fifties after a lifetime of healthy eating and exercise), was a concept with particular traction for this audience.

Putting disease and illness down to 'bad luck' appeared to be a way to deny personal responsibility for one's wellbeing where the health behaviours required are difficult, not known, or otherwise unpalatable. In specific relation to the health risk posed by asbestos, putting the chances of developing an illness down to luck appeared to be a way to deal with a problem respondents were not sure how to tackle, or when they suspected they have already been exposed.

Given this reluctance to believe their health is at risk, framing the risk as a 'safety' risk alongside other day to day safety risks could potentially have greater impact and increase its relevance rather than positioning asbestos exposure as a health risk.

*"You're not in control of your health anyway"*  
 [Bricklayer, Bridgend, Wales]

*"The older, it's usually a bit late for them now. Because they've obviously worked with it for most of their lives and they've only just found out that it's that bad for them"*  
 [Plumber, Southampton]

**1.2.3 Key Barrier 3: Audience do not feel personal responsibility to check or take action around asbestos**

The three key beliefs that underlay this barrier tended to be consistent for employees within larger companies. These included the following assertions:

***‘Assessment of risk is made by others prior to me starting work (for example, engineer, surveyor or architect)’***

***‘If asbestos is an issue, it’ll be removed by professionals before I work, so there’ll be no risk when I get there’***

***‘I don’t have control over work environment (for those working for larger employers in particular and some smaller vs. sole trader)’***

All three of these beliefs were underpinned by one or more of the following: a lack of confidence in one’s own ability to correctly assess risk, the expectation that in larger companies this would fall under someone else’s remit, plus, for those with very low knowledge/awareness, this was simply not on their radar at all.

Most respondents in addition, trusted their boss or client to inform them of any asbestos presence, but did not readily consider that they might not know either. In addition, there was a reluctance to be the one person to raise it as a potential issue and potentially cause a delay on the job without being very certain of the risk. The concern was that they would cause themselves or others to lose out on a job or payment.

*“I think someone working on the building would know if it was present”*  
[Labourer, Nottingham]

*“The foreman would tell us if we needed to wear something specific”*  
[Labourer, Nottingham]

*“You wouldn’t normally ask to see the survey or asbestos plan – that’s already been done, you’ve been made aware of that if asbestos is present”*  
[Electrical Engineer, Midlands]

*“You could phone the HSE and they could send someone out incognito – so it wouldn’t necessarily come back at me...you say I’m in this situation, I don’t want to be doing it, can you send someone out to check”*  
[Bricklayer, Bridgend, Wales]

*“It would never cross my mind to ask for a report, I’ve always just taken people’s word for it”*  
[Bricklayer, Bridgend, Wales]

*“It is their employer’s duty to protect them”*  
[Plumber, Southampton]



#### 1.2.4 Key barrier 4: Opportunity cost of checking or taking action feels too high

There were two important issues and beliefs that underlay this barrier to action, both of which were more typical of sole traders and those in smaller companies.

##### ***'Assessment is not the norm'***

Assessing the asbestos risk for many respondents (especially sole traders and those in smaller companies) was simply not part of their typical mindset when starting on a job. Practically, this meant that the process of finding and removing asbestos was typically not costed for nor factored in to timescales when planning out a job.

*"I've never known anyone to do that though...it's not that common is it?"*  
[Plasterer, London]

##### ***'I can't afford the time or money to make a formal assessment'***

Secondly, there were indications that actually many were making *an active choice* to reject their responsibility to check for asbestos, asserting that it was not feasible to fit this into their work practice and continue to make a profit.

Respondents cited several ways in which complications arising from asbestos presence might affect job costs or earnings. Knowing that tests or specialist teams might need to be involved, potentially leading to delays or increased costs, meant that many claimed it would actually be easier to just press ahead despite the risks.

*"I've just got to get on with it, 'cos obviously I'm working to a price."*  
[Plumber, Southampton]

#### 1.2.5 Key barrier 5: Lack of (accurate) 'how to'

Despite some respondents reporting high confidence levels with regards to asbestos awareness, there were many tradesmen in the sample who admitted gaps in their knowledge and specifically a lack of information around 'how to' deal with it.

***'I don't know how to identify it'***

The first significant 'gap' in knowledge, was an inability to visually identify asbestos. However, many also did not consider that asbestos would be likely to be hidden from view and indeed its presence may never be confirmed. It was also not typically considered that in order to be 100% certain that something was, or contained, asbestos a test would need to be carried out.

*"I don't know what it looks like."*

[Labourer, Nottingham]

*"If I have seen asbestos I wouldn't know if it was asbestos or not. I've never been shown what it is, to be honest"*

[Caretaker, Bridgend, Wales]

***'I don't know all the places it can be'***

This issue is in line with the generally low awareness about the risk of exposure. Whilst there was some knowledge about higher risk locations (for example round flues and artex ceilings), not all were aware of these and knowledge was typically patchy rather than comprehensive.

***'I don't know all the ways to protect myself'***

In addition to the above, many respondents also openly acknowledged that they were unaware of all the necessary measures and safety precautions required in order to work with asbestos.

***'I'm sure I'm doing enough already'***

On the other hand, there was a contingent of respondents who expressed higher levels of confidence about their knowledge base. These tradesmen felt they would be able to recognise asbestos if they came across it and also that they would know what measures to put in place to protect themselves. However, the examples these individuals gave (for example, using a t-shirt as a 'mask', or saturating rather than dampening down the asbestos material) indicated that their knowledge could be insufficient to ensure protection from asbestos. In these instances it appeared to be that their small amount of knowledge was generating a dangerous and false sense of security.

### 1.2.6 Key barrier 6: PPE (personal protective equipment) and protective measures raise a number of emotional and rational issues

There were a range of emotionally and rationally based reasons why PPE was resisted, which derived either from assumptions or experience of what it would involve.

The perceived discomfort of PPE was mentioned by many respondents. Wearing a mask and protective overalls was said to be hot and sweaty (especially in warmer months) and likely to make working more awkward. Other examples of the impracticality of PPE were raised, including its potential to reduce visibility and cause a trip hazard.

*"You're not going to put a mask on to knock down a wall in the summer cos it's too hot"*

[Plasterer, Bridgend, Wales]

*"You could not wear that and paint!"*

[Painter/decorator, Bridgend, Wales]

*"[Masks] are not nice to work with, it's not practical"*

[Plasterer, Bridgend, Wales]

A minority of respondents also questioned whether the PPE was 100% reliable, which further undermined their commitment to wearing it.

The cost of PPE was considered as an *additional* expense which would ultimately reduce their profit margin. There were concerns that it would add to pressures from their boss or client to deliver a project on time and to budget, or that they might be pricing themselves out of a job if they insisted on buying and wearing it.

*"I just get on with it... Because you've got to earn a living"*

[Electrician, London]

*"The contractor's not interested – it will cost him money... and it's like 'no mate - you either work or you get out!'"*

[Electrician, London]

*"Cause otherwise, you've got to mask off all the walls. You could spend half the day, for a bit of asbestos"*

[Plumber, Southampton]

Given these varied negative associations with PPE, and the perceived lack of relevant risk, wearing it was considered unnecessary (or unhelpful) and as it was not the typical thing to do was also considered embarrassing and reflecting badly on the wearer.

*"Everyone would think you'd gone mad!"*

[Labourer, Nottingham]

*"You're dressing like that 'just in case'...you could wear that 365 days a year and only once come across the need for it"*

[Bricklayer, Bridgend, Wales]

*"It would be overkill, because it's an unknown quantity. If you're in an environment where you know there are toxic fumes or spray particles you know you want to wear your mask"*

[Painter/decorator, Bridgend, Wales]

### 1.3 Overcoming Barriers – Indications for Communication Needs

This stage of research also looked at a range of information, including messages, visuals, previous Hidden Killer campaign materials and messengers. This exploration provided indications of what types of messages had greater impact with the audience and were worth potentially taking into the next stage of communication development. These are discussed below.

#### 1.3.1 Making the issue relevant

There were a range of visuals and messages tested at Stage 1 that worked well to help make the *issue relevant* to respondents, by making the link to places they work, the jobs they do and the people it is likely to affect.

In terms of the visuals specifically, images that depicted domestic settings (as in the existing campaign material) were especially helpful to establish the link with respondents' own work environments. Such images were a strong challenge to the belief that asbestos is present only or mostly in 'industrial' type settings. Seeing the asbestos risk within a domestic setting was also seen to highlight the danger to the DIY audience and added to an overall sense of concern about such buildings.

It was also helpful to see images of trades people drilling into asbestos that was unseen to them (as in the previous Hidden Killer campaign material), as this served as a powerful reminder that just because they cannot see it, does not mean it is not there. There were some indications that including a range of trades people in the same setting might also help to increase relevance, especially to those who may not be directly disturbing asbestos, but still at risk of exposure for example, painters and decorators and plasterers.

In terms of messages, those that were particularly powerful were those that challenged misconceptions about where asbestos is likely to be (both the type of building and location within the building) and increased the sense that asbestos might be present in *any workplace*, for example:

***“Many people think that because asbestos stopped being used in industry years ago it is no longer an issue. In fact, it can be present in any building built or refurbished before the year 2000 and remains in millions of buildings across the country – domestic and commercial. You are highly likely to come face to face with it during your work.<sup>13</sup>”***

And although not directly tested, the research indicated that including reference to ‘domestic and commercial’ would likely help reinforce relevance.

***“I just didn’t realise all the places that asbestos could be like the outside of buildings too ...knowing that actually started to make me worry quite a bit”***

The use of the date was a very helpful and specific marker that provided a direct challenge to respondents’ current perceptions. The tone of these messages too was helpful – ‘norming’ the misperception about asbestos helped absolve personal responsibility to date and reassured respondents that there was ‘no need to feel stupid’, while maintaining the imperative for action in the future.

*“If we knew what asbestos was in, if we knew how to recognise it, and the level of protection that we need that would be helpful”*

[Bricklayer, Bridgend, Wales]

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<sup>13</sup> Some respondents recalled this message from the previous campaign. They reported that they had been surprised to learn this and that at the time it had generated some discussion on site.

*"I had no idea it was still in buildings up to 2000. I thought it was stopped long before that. It's more prevalent than I thought"*

[Heating Engineer, Edinburgh]

One message that did not test particularly well was:

***"You are potentially at risk of asbestos everyday"***

Despite actually being the key message that needs to be imparted to the audience, its lack of specificity and weak insinuation of risk meant that it appeared to have limited impact on the current belief that they typically don't work with or near asbestos.

### **Case studies**

Respondents were shown some example case studies.

Some case study content tested at Stage 1 also worked well to increase personal relevance. In particular, the reference to specific trades helped to engage respondents in those job roles. However, some also felt that the focus on tradesmen exposed many years ago reinforced the perception that exposure was more a problem of the past than something that would affect them nowadays. (There is more detail on responses to case study content in section 2.7.3).

*"That wouldn't happen today"*

[Electrical Engineer, Nottingham]

### **From those already protecting themselves**

For those respondents who reported already protecting themselves against asbestos, it was evident that part of the reason they had started doing so was because they had realised the relevance of the risk to their workplace and job role. This included having seen asbestos in their workplace and feeling confident that they would know where to look for it and be able to identify it in the future. These were also individuals who reported having discussed asbestos at work with their colleagues.

### 1.3.2 Making the health risk relevant

There were several messages that worked well to help challenge the perceived lack of health risk amongst the audience. In particular, those facts with most power conveyed that a *lot of people* are affected by asbestos and the effects (ARDs and deaths) are *continuously manifesting* themselves, for example:

***“Approximately 4,500 people die every year from asbestos-related diseases and the number of deaths is on the rise. This is more than are killed on the roads.”***

***“Each week approximately 20 tradesmen die from asbestos related diseases”***

***“Asbestos kills more people than anything else in the workplace....”***

These helped to present the issue as both significant (respondents did not always realise the scale of the issue) and live (versus an issue of the past). Comparison to road deaths, other risks in the workplace and the use of specific numbers, all worked well to counter current audience perceptions. For maximum impact however, it would be helpful to deploy these facts alongside information about risk of exposure.

*“I didn’t realise it was that many people that died each year, whereas you do hear about people being killed on the road”*

[Electrical Engineer, Nottingham]

*“Seeing those numbers of how many people are dying a week is very alarming and scary. It’s something you think isn’t so much of a problem anymore”*

[Joiner, Edinburgh]

*“I think you need more of...the after effects, what’s going to happen”*

[Electrician, London]

*“That one stood out (20 tradesmen) – you’re speaking specifically to tradesmen”*

[Plumber, Bridgend, Wales]

Although not specifically tested, response to these help to indicate that messages which focus on the ‘safety’ of the individual, rather than just on their health are likely to have good impact.

Messages that worked less well were those that did not provide any new information for the target audience. For example:

***“The danger arises when asbestos is disturbed and the very small fibres are breathed in”***

This was very low impact as it was known by almost all respondents or at least felt very familiar information.

Although not tested, research indicated that messages could have impact, if they reinforce the fact that repeated exposure to only small amounts of asbestos could lead to serious problems. In addition there were indications that messages that bring in the significance of ‘day to day’ exposure may also have impact, for example:

***“It only takes a small amount of asbestos dust to cause serious problems”***

***“Although it takes some time to develop, asbestos is as much of a threat to your safety as electrics, dust and falls from height and needs to be considered on every job you do”***

### **From those already protecting themselves**

Those in the sample who were already protecting themselves typically had a greater knowledge about the outcomes of exposure, either via training or from peers. Some were simply more of the belief that a small amount could lead to serious health problems, indicating this too could be a potentially useful message to convey to those currently less convinced of the danger.

Others currently protecting themselves simply had a more health-oriented mindset which had worked to increase their initial engagement with the issue. Furthermore, those who knew people with ARD were more compelled to err on the side of caution, especially if those sufferers had done similar work to themselves.



### 1.3.3 Driving responsibility to take action

None of the materials or messages tested at Stage 1 worked well to drive the sense that respondents should take greater responsibility for checking for and protecting against asbestos.

Some responded relatively well to the message below, the central idea of which could be developed to place more responsibility with employees:

***“At the end of the day, no-one else is going to step in and stop you from doing the thing that might cause a problem, so you’ve GOT to make that decision yourself”***

Confidence could also potentially be raised by alluding to the *need to comply with the law* and *doing what most others do*.

#### **From those already protecting themselves**

Respondents already protecting themselves, may not have always felt responsible for assessing the asbestos risk, but if they worked for a larger organisation this was often taken care of as part of a routine assessment. Similarly, those using protection also tended to report greater choice around whether or not to work with asbestos and to have easier access to PPE.

*“People are not really bothered about your health, they just want the work done, so you’ve got to be more concerned about yourself, your health”*  
[Labourer, Nottingham]

### 1.3.4 Reducing opportunity cost of taking action

The research indicated that this was an important issue to overcome, although none of the materials or messages tested at Stage 1 effectively met this need. Developing sound bites for PR and messages which specifically address this barrier is likely to be beneficial as part of the communications.

Some benefits of action can help to overcome this barrier and act as a ‘pull’ towards behaviour. These benefits included:

- Status: being seen as professional (versus rogue) – see section 1.3.7 also

- Keeping up with modern practices.

The risk of legal repercussions also had impact for some of the audience, with some concerned about getting spot checks, fines and 'doing the right thing'. For others, however there was some disbelief about being 'caught out' and therefore it was unlikely to prompt action. There were no real strong negatives about legal messages, however, tonally, overemphasis on this point may irritate the audience, for whom some feel there are already too many rules and regulations.

These particular factors may also have impact in encouraging the use of PPE too.

### **From those already protecting themselves**

For those respondents currently protecting themselves, there was an understanding about the likelihood and impact of health risk and a desire to protect themselves and employees that helped to overcome this barrier.

#### 1.3.5 Providing an accurate 'how to'

The realities of working environments and circumstances as described by tradesmen in the sample indicate that information provided to them is likely to be beneficial. Respondents said they were used to picking up commercial material and instructions from places associated with work and trade touch-points. There would also appear to be potential for simple in situ reminders (for example flow charts, headline instructions) on stickers or toolbox cards.

Respondents reported the need for easy 'how to' information, both in terms of accessing this information (low effort) and in terms of digesting it (simple, straightforward instructions with visual support).

### **From those already protecting themselves**

For those respondents who were protecting themselves, training knowledge had provided them with the confidence and knowledge to work safely and request appropriate PPE. However for many of those in the sample who were not protecting themselves, going to get appropriate training was considered high effort and there

was low interest in doing this. Although, having appropriate information, instruction and training before working with asbestos is a legal requirement.

### 1.3.6 Empowering audience to use PPE

The messages that worked well, were those that framed protective behaviours as 'high status' and make the benefits of PPE and other protective measures start to outweigh the drawbacks. Messages which worked well were:

***"I wanted to be a professional in all aspects of my job"***

***"I wanted to set a good example for the guys at work"***

***"I thought, I've been doing the job for long enough - I should also know the proper way to protect myself from asbestos"***

***"The thing I realised is, you just need to think ahead a bit...so you know that you're in control of your own safety on a job"***

*"You get job satisfaction, end of the day the jobs done properly, you do it right....you do it once."*

[Plumber, Southampton]

*"He's in control, he knows what he wants, he's not going to be told what to do... he doesn't have to be reminded".*

[Electrical Engineer, Nottingham]

However, while high status is desirable (as it can generate respect and business) avoidance of 'cowboy' associations or irresponsible behaviour could be more useful.

Suggesting that a lack of action is irresponsible or wrong could be of benefit in terms of encouraging behaviour change, but there needs to be some caution around language and specifically how the audience is addressed and referred to. The audience currently do not see their current behaviour as being risky, so there was a tendency for this type of message to prompt defensiveness (for example, 'I didn't know, it's not my fault') which can distract from the need to take action. However

there is certainly some value (provided it is done sensitively) in communicating messages about avoiding negative associations, for example:

*“I would have felt so stupid if I’d got ill later in life and realised I could’ve done something about it....”*

*“When I realised that actually a lot of people do think about this and I’m in the minority, I felt really stupid. That made me think it’s more likely to be me so I better be more careful”*

*“I realised that actually I was being pretty irresponsible - I wasn’t just putting myself in danger but other people I work with”*

*“Employers and tradesmen who don’t take asbestos checking and working procedures extremely seriously are negligent as the consequences to them and their workers are life-changing”*

*“You have a right to ask for PPE. It’s always worth it for asbestos risks”*

*“Am I a risk-taker? No, because I didn’t have all the information”*

[Bricklayer, Bridgend, Wales]

### **From those currently protecting selves**

Those currently using PPE tended to work for larger companies who were able to offset cost and time issues. Very often these respondents were, or had been, prompted by others and told exactly what they needed to go out and buy. Having seen colleagues use PPE increased confidence as well as reducing embarrassment. This also meant that they were more likely to consider the risk ‘real’ if they saw others in PPE.

*“They told us what level of protection we needed and we went out and bought it”*

[Bricklayer, Bridgend, Wales]

*A lot of plumbers working in residential properties won’t wear anything. It’s more if they’re on commercial building sites when they’re forced to.”*

[Plumber, Bridgend, Wales]

### 1.3.7 Additional drivers – benefits and rewards for taking action

Aside from the more specific barriers and drivers discussed above, there were some overarching considerations that helped motivate the audience to action.

The first of these was the imperative to *reduce fear* around the asbestos risk. This was a universal concern and could be seen to underpin all other benefits. The fear of death and loss (of time spent with loved ones or of quality of life) was important for all, but perhaps more so for microcompanies who felt more responsible for their health and safety practices.

The *avoidance of guilt* was very much linked to this in terms of concerns about denying their family a father (and husband, although this was less of an immediate concern). Some respondents also wanted to avoid any guilt in terms of allowing harm to come to employees (and their employees' families) through negligent management. These concerns were more pronounced amongst respondents with families and those employed in microcompanies.

*"I don't want something to happen to me in 20-30 years time. I know what's important to me: my wife and children"*

[Electrical Engineer, Nottingham]

*"I mean, we all want to be around and see grandkids and stuff like that so, you know, that's very relevant"*

[Carpenter, Southampton]

*"It's also wanting to be there for your family, to see your grandchildren and things like that. It's not just you you're damaging"*

[Plasterer, Manchester]

*"I mean later in life, obviously you want to be around for you're kids."*

[Decorator, Nottingham]

There was also the issue of *status*, which whilst not something discussed overtly, was implicit in many of the discussions around work life. Status was a concept that emerged as an important concern amongst the audience, with higher status associations (such as being: in control, knowledgeable, cautious, professional, risk averse/aware, experienced, safe, confident, skilled and responsible for oneself and others), guaranteeing not only respect from others, but work and business too. Low status (with associations of being irresponsible, low skilled, lacking in knowledge, ignorant, in danger, at risk, ignoring good practice, unsafe, reckless and stupid)

attracted the opposite response from colleagues and clients. Therefore attaching correct behaviours around asbestos to high status could provide a positive overall goal to move towards. However, making the link in this way is likely to need to be balanced by the subtle labelling of incorrect behaviours (as highlighted in section 1.3.6)

## 1.4 Call to Action

In Stage 1, there were some initial explorations around call to action, that is, what respondents claim they would do in response to seeing messages around asbestos. This is further discussed in detail under Communication Needs, section 2.6. This stage of research indicated that currently respondents were often only willing to take the lowest effort or cost option. There is potential that if the relevance of the issue is increased and empowerment is raised via the communication pieces then motivation and willingness to make higher effort may increase – but at present it appears the audience is generally looking for low effort options. Indeed, research indicated that Call to Actions were likely to be of greater interest if they offered useful benefits, for example, free information or items, new information and easy to use.

## 1.5 Channels, Formats and Messengers

Stage 1 also provided indications of appropriate channels, formats and messengers. This is further discussed in 2.8 and 2.9 below.

### ***Channels***

This stage of research indicated that the audience were using on-line resources for work, however, were less likely to be using social media generally and in particular for 'work' related matters. The audience are using a range of TV and radio channels – radio in particular in a work context. It also indicated that some are using their phone as a mobile 'computer' i.e. for accessing emails, web browsing and/or using apps of trade suppliers. Trade magazines were mentioned as being read by some including free catalogues or magazines from suppliers.

Trade suppliers were felt to be a key channel for this audience, with many claiming high interest in receiving messages and information in/from these settings. This channel emerged as a good way to ensure that information 'came to them', but also that it was a touch point at which they are already in a 'work frame of mind', and more open to messages and information related to health and safety (as opposed to for example, when they are in their homes). The additional benefit to this channel was that trade suppliers were considered by respondents to be a practical and ready to hand source of help, should they need any further guidance or questions answered.

### ***Formats***

This stage indicated that 'easy to read' leaflets distributed via trade counters or the workplace may have impact. Response to the Hidden Killer leaflet from the last campaign was relatively positive when it was shown. It was considered to assist with immediate questions, such as what materials containing asbestos look like and where it might be found and the case studies were felt direct and to the point. However, although some of the existing content was useful, the presentation was not ideal. For example, the cover and the order in which information was included was not particularly engaging and positioned the leaflet as a 'communication' (through starting with testimonial) rather than a 'useful information leaflet' which they would prefer.

Although not directly suggested by respondents there were indications, from their comments, that given current behaviour (and way of working) that a simple information tool, for example, a sticker or a card, which could be put into their tool kit may have some impact. This could include, for example, a reminder of the importance to check, what to check for and flow charts. This could be either as a separate guide on asbestos or could be as part of a piece of information on other day to day risks.

### ***Messengers***

Research in this stage provided indications of appropriate messengers including trade suppliers and mainstream newspapers. HSE and TUC were considered authority in this area. There was limited interest in celebrity spokespeople.

## 1.6 Overarching Behaviour Journey

At Stage 1 a hypothesised behaviour journey for the audience was tested. This was:

### ***Stop → Plan → Protect***

The research found that there were several issues with this proposed journey in terms of encouraging behaviour change. There were specific words that created issues, for example the word 'stop' did not work well as a starting point on a journey to action. Whilst respondents were ready to consider what might need to be done or what steps need to be taken *once relevance has been established*, the word 'stop' allowed them to effectively 'opt out' from the journey at the very start. The audience already thinks that they would 'stop' if they know asbestos is present, or that because the issue is irrelevant to them, there is no need to stop. As such, this hypothesised behaviour journey risks having limited impact in terms of behaviour change.

The findings from the research indicated that the overarching behaviour journey is more likely to be successful as follows:

### ***[Understand personal risk] → Double check → Ask/Plan → Protect***

The first step must ensure that the audience are fully engaged and *understand the personal risk* of exposure in their occupation, the consequences that are likely to result and that there are easy and worthwhile steps to undertake (which carry emotional benefits and overcome more rational barriers). Only once the relevance of the issues has been firmly established can the behaviour journey begin.

Double checking and asking/planning would be concerned with reducing exposure. Actions at this stage could include<sup>14</sup>:

1. *Finding out more about the building and the parts of it you will be working on – was it built or refurbished before the year 2000, will you be working on materials likely to contain asbestos such as ceiling tiles, pipe insulation and boilers?*
2. *Asking to see the building plan/asbestos survey to see if it is in the building*

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<sup>14</sup> Examples here are drawn from detail within the initial audience journey and stimulus material. Specific actions will obviously need to be led by behaviour priorities and measurable actions



3. *If a plan/survey is not available, assume the risk may be there on areas you can't see and that have potential to have asbestos present*
4. *If you think or know asbestos is present plan the work or job so that you don't have to disturb it if possible.*
5. *If you do have to disturb it, follow the procedures below...*

Actions sitting below the 'Protect' stage are likely to be concerned with protecting from exposure, e.g.

1. *If you have to disturb the asbestos to get the job done then you must have appropriate information, instruction or training before starting the job.*
2. *You can get this knowledge through a course or from HSE Asbestos Essentials (available as a book or online), which provides information and specific task sheets to help you work with asbestos safely. Training of this type is a legal requirement for unlicensed asbestos work.*
3. *You can protect yourself by taking steps such as:*
  - *Using hand tools instead of power tools to limit the amount of dust you create*
  - *Cleaning up and removing bags of waste as you go about the job, instead of letting dust linger*
  - *Wearing a properly fitted mask appropriate for asbestos work (type FFP3)*
  - *Minimising the disruption to the materials you are working on so trying not to break things if not essential to the job*
4. *If you don't have the correct information or knowledge don't touch it*

This reappraisal of the audience journey in light of findings around barriers and motivations to action means that the communications strategy needs to engage a range of key strands and be information-rich. Response to the materials tested in Stage 1 indicated a good range of messages and information that had potential to work well.

## 2. Communications Needs

This section of this report provides findings specifically from Stage 2 of the research as well as collating some findings from Stage 1 with Stage 2 in relation to messengers and channels.

### 2.1 Context: Revisit of Barriers

The findings from Stage 2 reinforced the full range of barriers identified in Stage 1. However it was noted through the research and when looking at response to the communication approaches that *'awareness of relevance of risk in work'* - that is, *'Exposure to asbestos is not a risk for me and my work'* is the most critical hurdle to address. To gain audience attention and getting them to take action, addressing the relevance barrier is likely to be most important ahead of any other messaging. Mention of harms to address personal health risks remains an important component but overall appeared less effective as an entry point to engage this audience.

### 2.2 Response to Adcepts Tested at Stage 2

In order to understand potential messaging territory start points for the campaign, a proposition based on the findings from Stage 1 was developed, i.e.

***You are risking your life and your livelihood if you do not take appropriate precautions to protect against asbestos on every job.***

This proposition was used to develop four potential approaches to the campaign. These were tested in the research as adcepts<sup>15</sup>, in order to understand which message territories and specific messages had the most potential to overcome audience barriers and motivate regular and appropriate action to protect against the asbestos risk. These were tested with respondents, firstly as headlines only and then with visuals and copy in order that the messages could be explored without any influence of the visuals. For example, if the visual was less appealing this might detract from the message, which might have had some impact in its own right.

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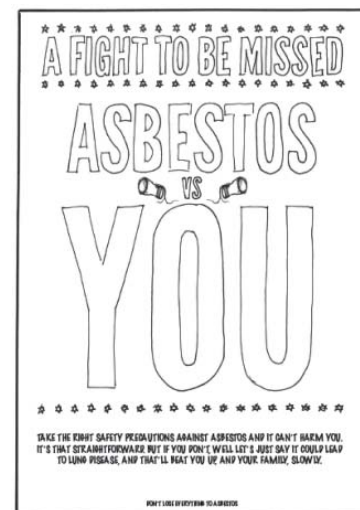
<sup>15</sup> Adcepts are stimulus which include visuals and text. These are designed to test communication territories, messages and tone. They are not designed to be completed adverts. This is explained to respondents when they are shown.

Overall research identified that each of the four approaches went some way to deliver to the different barriers and drivers identified in Stage 1 research. However, the ‘Target’ adcept was the only one which addressed the key barrier of relevance most immediately for the audience, which meant it had greater impact overall. That said, as identified in Stage 1 ‘Loss aversion’ was a key emotional driver for many and therefore keeping this message prominent in the campaign development and execution is likely to be beneficial.

The next sections outline in detail the response to the visuals and headlines of each of the four adcepts, from least to most impactful. Response to the copy is discussed in section 2.3.

### 2.2.1 A fight to be missed

The main take out from this headline was the focus on the ‘danger’ of asbestos, which was useful to highlight and reinforce. However, as this information largely fitted with what they already know, there is a real danger of the audience not being drawn in or taken further if this is the ‘lead in’ message to the issue. However, this adcept provided some useful learning around ‘simplicity of message’ being engaging for this audience.



#### **Take-out**

In terms of take-out, the key message for many respondents was that asbestos is an opponent; that it is threatening and dangerous, something they need to worry about and something that should be avoided. For others however they were less clear as to what the adcept was saying, or were uncertain that a ‘fight’ metaphor was appropriate given that in many instances you would not know that you are being exposed to asbestos.

*“It’s telling you to stay away from asbestos”*

[Caretaker, Glasgow]

*"You don't want to come in contact with it, you want to get the right people in"*  
[Labourer, Oldham]

*"How can it be a fight if you don't know it's hurting you? It's not a fight, it's more sneaky than that"*  
[Carpenter, Cardiff]

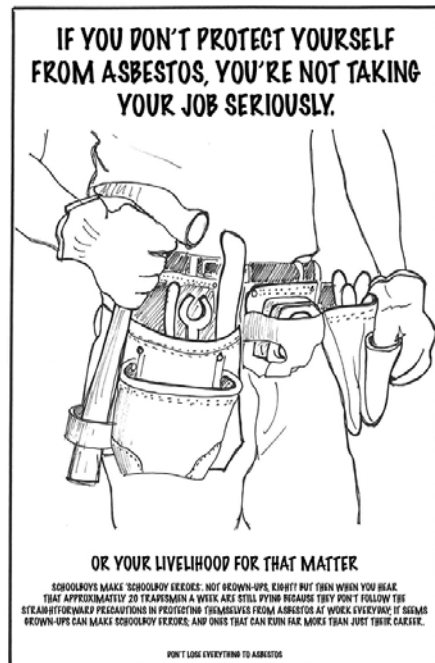
### **Engagement**

In terms of engagement, respondents considered this adcept short and to the point which was particularly helpful in achieving an immediate connection. The message was easy to read at a glance, not too busy and clearly stated that it is about the issue of asbestos. The directness of the copy, as it was clearly speaking to 'the audience', was also helpful. The perception that it reflected 'fighting talk' or a 'bantering' tone was also a useful way to engage this audience. However, the boxing metaphor overall polarised the audience. For a few it reminded them of cancer charity communication and for others it felt like it trivialised the issue and might not be taken seriously. Some respondents were also simply a bit confused and struggled to see the relevance.

*"On a site – it would become comedy"*  
[Painter/Decorator, Glasgow]

## 2.2.2 Taking your job seriously

The adcept is shown below. The picture on the right is a visual reference that was used to indicate the intention of the tool belt in the visual to potentially be a ‘toy’ tool belt.



Overall, the headline and visual generated inconsistent responses. The visual of the tool belt worked well to generate a sense of relevance across trades, but there were issues with the headline that reduced engagement and impact of the creative idea overall. The concept that working with asbestos in an appropriate or inappropriate way might impact on one's *status* was motivating, but research indicated that it needs to be talked about in positive terms to engage this audience.

### **Take-out**

With regards to the headline take-out - for some, this communicated the messages that: doing a good job is about not cutting corners (which includes how you deal with asbestos) and that you risk damage to your health if you don't take protection seriously. For others, there was general confusion around its meaning which severely reduced any useful take-out, or the relative complexity of the phrasing meant that respondents took out only a topline meaning along the lines of 'you need to protect

yourself from asbestos'. In the latter case, although the message was not rejected, it was also not really 'new news' reducing the overall impact.

The take out from the visual elements was more consistent but quite topline. The tools and tool-belt basically communicated that this was a message directed at tradespeople.

### **Engagement**

The extent to which the headline engaged this audience was limited. The response was largely independent of the visual (more on this below) and for a few respondents the tone felt appropriately direct and hard-hitting. There was general agreement about the importance of taking one's job seriously, now and in the future.

*"That's sort of talking to you on a level isn't it? You can't really argue with that"*  
[Labourer, Cardiff]

*"It would make me feel belittled but that's good because then I'd think the next time when an asbestos query comes up it would make me think back to that and make me get the right help for it"*  
[Electrician, Thatcham]

However, a few felt affronted by the 'accusation' that they do not currently do so. Sole traders, reliant on their reputation and commitment to taking their job seriously, were more sensitive to the implication. On the other hand, younger respondents did not always connect with notion of taking their jobs (too) seriously, nor were sufficiently motivated by this idea.

*"It suggests that I'm not doing my job properly if I don't think about asbestos all the time, but I do do it properly"*  
[Carpenter, Thatcham]

A more critical issue with the headline was that it was essentially quite difficult for respondents to 'unpack' and readily comprehend the link between component phrases. For example, many struggled to understand the relationship between 'protecting oneself' and 'taking one's job seriously'. The more logical connection was felt to be that protecting oneself would be about taking one's *health* seriously rather than one's job. There was also confusion around the use of the word 'job' in the headline, which could variously mean one's last working job, or an entire working life/livelihood. All these issues combined to mean that engagement was not immediate and indications were that the slight additional effort required to decipher the message would diminish the impact of this approach.

*"There's too many words"*

[Painter/Decorator, Glasgow]

In terms of engagement via the visual execution, being able to see themselves in the image was helpful to increase relevance, although the impact overall was fairly low. In addition the visual reference to the toy hammer was polarising– some felt it was a useful device which added impact and fitted well with the copy, e.g. 'school boy', where others considered it patronising.

*"I think the toy thing, it's a bit silly really, not sure you need that"*

[Carpenter, Thatcham]

*"That undermines it the idea of a toy hammer, I get what it means but it doesn't drive the point"*

[Builder, Thatcham]

*"It's just a guy standing with a work belt on and a pair of gloves and a chocolate hammer"*

[Joiner, Glasgow]

### 2.2.3 Don't let asbestos undo all your hard work



Overall there was some strong emotional impact in the idea of loss, which triggers an intention to do things right. However, the current execution narrowed the target (given the focus on loss of family life only) and risks missing the mark with many of the audience. There is potential perhaps to use this idea as a messaging strand within targeted material or activity rather than as an overarching approach.

**Take-out**

In terms of take-out from the headline alone, the respondents understood that this referred to something being at stake and likely to be lost. However, without the visual cue the 'hard work' reference was not immediately clear. With the visual, the take-out was more immediate. The messages understood were: 'if you get ill from asbestos you will lose all that you've been working towards that is, time with family, ability to support, and so on'. For some, they see this as a more threatening message about the potential for asbestos to directly harm or kill their family (from inadvertent exposure).

The visual communicates the detail around the nature of loss – that playing with one's family, or the health and well being of one's family could both be at stake.

**Engagement**

In terms of engagement, the overall approach did have emotional power for some. It not only brought home the idea of the loss of something they care deeply about, but also generated a response of wanting to act to protect their families. 'Undoing all your hard work' was less engaging; respondents felt that positioning the threat as 'damaging or ruining your *future*' would have greater impact.

However for others in the sample there were broader issues with engagement. For those without children this message felt much less relevant. Similarly for those with older children, there was a disconnect with the adcept, given they were already past the 'playing in the park' stage with their family. There was also a sense that a family visual was somewhat unexpected and less relevant to a health and safety message or asbestos and therefore it was considered that it could be overlooked. For some the visual felt a bit too busy.

*"I don't like the picture. It doesn't tell me anything about asbestos. And not everyone's got a family. Why target everyone with that family, child scenario?"*  
[Painter/decorator, Thatcham]

*"I take it this is meant to be me, chasing around my kid? It doesn't make me think of asbestos"*  
[Joiner, Glasgow]

*"If you put it in a site I don't think anyone would take any notice of it"*  
[Painter/Decorator, Glasgow]



## 2.2.4 Target



Overall the core idea of this approach that the audience are potentially being an 'easy target' if they ignore asbestos was effective in initially engaging the audience and making the issue seem relevant to them. However, the approach will need some development, as the second part of the headline 'protect yourself' has less impact overall, given that it does not provide them with any new or specific direction. As such it might be preferable to replace it with a line that clarifies take-out and invites further investigation, for example: *it's in places you wouldn't expect.*

### **Take-out**

In terms of take-out from the headline, there was a range of understanding. The opening directive 'don't be an easy target' delivered multiple messages to the audience. Firstly, it communicated strongly that that it is *easy to get caught out by asbestos*. Secondly, a connection between being an easy target and having a cowboy attitude, novice or otherwise sloppy approach to work was raised, and motivated respondents to avoid those associations.

*"You're going to make yourself an easy target if you're not wearing the right clothing"*

[Labourer, Oldham]

*"It gives the message how easy it is to come into a contact with asbestos. Makes you very cautious. It's easy to think 'Oh, I'll be somewhere only half an hour, it doesn't matter'. But it does"*

[Plasterer, Birmingham]

The second part of the headline, '*protect yourself from asbestos*' did communicate the need to check and protect yourself from asbestos if you do not know it is there.

However, this also led to some queries – how does one protect oneself? And, is it not just possible to avoid asbestos rather than have to go to lengths to protect?

*“I think everyone in the trade knows that if you find asbestos you don’t touch it and you get the specialist in to clear it”*

[Plasterer, Cardiff]

The visual element of this approach clearly showed to respondents *an unprotected man going about his regular job*. That he was ‘in the line of sight’ communicated that he was seemingly under threat or attack, although from what exactly was not always immediately clear. (It is important to note that this slight lack of clarity around the nature of the threat may have been more to do with the stimulus, given that it was only a draft version of the approach, but it is worth bearing in mind if this concept is taken forwards). It also prompted respondents to consider that the asbestos was actually behind the wall and potentially unknown to the man in the picture.

*“You are in line of fire, you could get killed”*

[Carpenter, Thatcham]

### **Engagement**

With regards to the level of engagement created by this adcept, the headline delivered an appropriate ‘warning’ tone for respondents. This was felt to be suitable for the subject matter and helped to further signify that the message was about risk or damage. This had good impact in terms of prompting respondents to ‘pay attention’ given they are relatively attuned to communications around risk at work.

Other ways in which engagement was increased for respondents included the inclusion of a tradesman in the overall visual which helped respondents to easily ‘put themselves into the picture’. The inclusion of a person per se and being able to see their face (versus just their body as in the ‘job seriously’ adcept) also added some human interest. Demonstrating them doing a task was helpful as it acted as a subtle learning point; it was a useful signal or reminder of when this situation is likely to occur. The ‘target’ visual device was also considered arresting.

*“It’s showing workmen, in a workplace. It shows you what we deal with, straight away”*

[Painter/Decorator, Glasgow]

Not all trades felt the scenario depicted was personally relevant (for example, plumbers as it was clearly not a plumber being shown), and being completely

unprotected felt unrealistic for some. In addition the evocation to 'protect yourself from asbestos' can prompt an unhelpful response along the lines of 'I will just avoid asbestos in the future', or it simply was not intriguing enough to invite further investigation. There was some sense of a familiarity with this idea which may reduce cut-through, although it is likely that this drawback could be mitigated through appropriate styling and targeting.

*"But the thing is there's no way you can protect yourself from asbestos except to know where it is and don't touch it"*

[Partition Erector, Cardiff]

In terms of developing this approach further and addressing some of the drawbacks outlined above, a number of suggestions emerged through discussions. For example, it might be helpful if the visual depicted two individuals, one unprotected (with the line of sight on him) and the other protected (showing the 'how to' at a glance). It could also be helpful to include a range of people working within the scene, to reflect a familiar practice of several trades working alongside each other. This would be likely to reduce the ability for viewers to 'opt out' because they do not see themselves in the image or because they maintain they do not create dust themselves. In relation to the point above about the level of protection, it might improve engagement with the message if the tradesman shown had some protection in place. Impact might be improved by further highlighting the 'target' visual device.

*"It should have a split picture – show you the right thing and then the wrong thing"*

[Joiner, Glasgow]

## 2.3 Response to Lead Copy

There were four different body copy alternatives tested at Stage 2 as part of the adcepts discussed above.

Overall response to these was mixed, with some specific elements working well to help overcome barriers and reinforce drivers. Other elements, however, tended to distract or even irritate respondents. More details on this are discussed in section 2.3.1 and 2.3.2 below.

One general learning that emerged from testing lead copy alternatives, however, was that this audience have a low threshold of interest when it comes to reading and taking in details. There were frequent comments made around a preference for shorter and simpler text.

The four body copy alternatives were as follows:

***Schoolboys make ‘schoolboy errors’. Not grown-ups, right? But then when you hear that approximately 20 tradesmen a week are still dying because they don’t follow the straightforward precautions in protecting themselves from asbestos at work everyday; it seems grown-ups can make schoolboy errors; and ones that can ruin far more than just their career.***

***Taking the right precautions in protecting yourself from asbestos when you’re at work can be straightforward. But if you don’t, well it’s a schoolboy error that could undo all your hard work – and not just in terms of your professional life, but life at home with your family.***

***Did you know that approximately 20 tradesmen a week still die from asbestos related illnesses?***

***Approximately 20 tradesmen a week still die from asbestos related illnesses. Fact.***

***Taking the right precautions in protecting yourself from asbestos when you’re at work is straightforward. But if you’re not taking the right precautions, well you could end up facing something a little more testing. Lung disease. We think you’ll agree that, that could destroy more than just your career.***

***Take the right safety precautions against asbestos and it can’t harm you. It’s that straightforward. But if you don’t, well let’s just say it could lead to lung disease, and that’ll beat you up, and your family, slowly.***

### 2.3.1 Messaging and language working less well

#### **‘School boy Errors’**

There was a somewhat mixed response to this phrase, but overall it was generally disliked in this context. On the one hand it was recognised as having a ‘bantering tone’ which could be quite light-hearted and was felt to be ‘site talk’. However, in this context the light-hearted tone was felt to jar with what they considered a serious subject matter. ‘School boy error’, was also felt to imply a small mistake, rather than something which in this case could cost your life.

*“It’s not a schoolboy error. It’s past that. A schoolboy error is not life-threatening. It’s you do something silly”*

[Painter/decorator, Thatcham]

*“I don’t see a link between schoolboy errors and asbestos. It sounds like it’s someone who’s recently started. And it could be anybody. The main reason why people take chances with asbestos is for cost. Employers cut corners, trying to get the job done more quickly and by that putting people at risk”*

[Plasterer, Birmingham]

An aversion to being labelled a ‘cowboy’ or a focus on reputation was suggested by some as an alternative to ‘schoolboy error’.

*“No builder wants to be called a cowboy builder. That’s worse than being sworn at”*

[Plumber, Birmingham]

### 2.3.2 Messaging and language working well

There were, however, many elements in the copy that worked well. Specifically, as found in Stage 1, **the facts** were well received and had strong impact, for example:

***Approximately 20 tradesmen a week still die from asbestos related illnesses.***

***Fact.***

This statement helps to reinforce the serious nature of the asbestos issue. The number quoted felt high, and was typically recalled at the end of the session. It operated as a powerful reason to believe, although could be queried by some who, having not had any first-hand experience of ARDs, were unsure ‘who’ these people

were. There was also a tendency to reject or deny the power of this message when read in the context of ‘taking safety precautions,’ given that this seemed to imply that blame was being unfairly apportioned to them, i.e. *‘approximately 20 tradesmen a week are still dying because they don’t follow the straightforward precautions in protecting themselves...’*

In terms of developing this fact even further, there were indications that mentioning that these deaths were premature was also helpful to help counter the assumption that it would only affect older tradesmen, or at a very old age anyway, for example, 20 tradesmen a week still die prematurely. This could also be done in detailed communications by referencing ‘who’ is dying helping to reinforce a spread of ages and trades.

*“‘20 tradesmen a week...’ That’s hard-hitting. You can have a lot of words but when you have a figure like that you feel ‘Blimey!’ I don’t think you can be wishy-washy about it. I think you have to be harsh about it”*

[Painter/decorator, Thatcham]

Where ‘**precautions**’ were mentioned, this worked well to generate the sense that a solution or effective action could be taken, for example:

***‘Take the right safety precautions against asbestos’***

The phrase ‘right safety precautions’ was positively received. It prompted consideration that there are existing correct procedures and the word safety reinforces that this is about ‘health and safety’ and has direct impact on them. It also emerged as useful to suggest that these precautions would be straightforward or easy. ‘Precautions’ was a word generally preferred to phrases such as ‘steps’ or ‘measures’ because it created more of a sense of *official protocols*.

*“Right safety precautions - that’s the most professional, like it’s from a governing body and this is what they want you to do... Follow these and you’re covered”*

[Labourer, Oldham]

*“The right precautions. Because it’s what you should be doing”*

[Painter/Decorator, Glasgow]

Making reference to the **illness** that could result from exposure was also useful to include, for example:

***It could lead to lung disease, and that'll beat you up and your family slowly***

This served as a powerful reminder to respondents that asbestos can lead to really serious outcomes and cause devastating personal loss and damage to their lives. There was a mix of responses in terms of which wording worked best to convey the nature of the threat to their health. The word 'cancer' in itself had a strong impact, perhaps unsurprisingly given well known associations with pain, debilitating illness and death. However, there was a danger the word cancer imparted a more generic 'health threat' on occasion prompting the response that 'everything gives you cancer these days'. Making the link to asbestos a bit clearer, for example using the phrase 'asbestos related cancer' may help boost credibility of the claim. The phrase 'lung disease' was generally impactful but could also suffer from sounding more generic. Finally, the wording of '*beating you up and your family slowly*' had good impact for those with families and worked especially well to communicate the long term effects of living with ARDs.

*"A slow painful death. Well, you'd rather have a quick painless one wouldn't you?"*

[Joiner, Glasgow]

Another element in the copy that worked well with the audience was where reference was made to the **wider impact of asbestos exposure** and ARD development, for example:

***You could ruin your livelihood******You could ruin far more than your work life***

Reminding respondents about the potential threat to their home life was a useful means to raise engagement with the issue. The word 'livelihood' specifically was a helpful shortcut to refer to both home and work life, but more explicit descriptions of work also worked well. For example, putting work in the context of one's ability to earn money or as part of one's identity was also motivating. The word 'career' however could polarise – some simply felt that it was a not a word that applied to them, and that the words 'job' or 'trade' were more appropriate.

The reference to needing to consider the asbestos risk on '**every job**', not only reflected audience language effectively, it helped to specify the need to be alert on a

regular or routine basis. On the other hand, some respondents felt this was a bit over the top, especially given that you might work on 'one job' for several weeks.

*"On every job' There are some days when you're not going to be concerned too much but on every job you need to be aware that this killer could be in the air or in the atmosphere. Always when you're at work you have to have a professional outlook"*

[Labourer, Oldham]

There were two additional messages that were tested that also stood out as being particularly motivating for the target audience. These worked strongly in the first stage of research and findings from this stage reinforced their effectiveness in raising relevance to the audience.

The first was one that focused on the presence of asbestos. Below is an 'edited' version as the one tested felt too long by the audience – with the key elements being any building and year 2000.

***Asbestos can be present in any building built or refurbished before the year 2000 and remains in millions of buildings across the country, domestic and commercial.***

As previously, the date at which asbestos stopped being used was a surprise to all respondents and really helped boost the sense of personal relevance.

*"That's important that, because people don't know that. That's shocking...I really thought it was more of an 80s thing. I thought they'd got rid of it all now"*

[Electrician, Glasgow]

*"A lot of people think it's just in commercial buildings."*

[Painter/Decorator, Glasgow]

The second message related to numbers of deaths:

***Approximately 4,500 people die every year from asbestos-related diseases and the number of deaths is on the rise. This is more than are killed on the roads in Great Britain.***

The specific number of deaths a year was a powerful fact to communicate and comparing this figure to road deaths was very effective at putting the issue in the



context of something they already perceived to be a big killer. It would certainly be worth considering the 'year 2000' message as either the primary message or for use in the main body copy. The '4500 deaths a year' message is also likely to be helpful to convey, perhaps through other communications.

*"4500, that's a big number, that's really impactful – it does make you think"*  
[Plumber, Thatcham]

*"The figures of 4,500 people and comparing it to the roads, that's what sticks in my mind the most"*  
[Caretaker, Glasgow]

## 2.4 Response to Strap-lines

Four strap-line alternatives were tested at Stage 2. These strap-lines were tested as stand-alone and also in the context of the adcepts.

***'Don't lose everything to asbestos'***

***'Take asbestos as seriously as your trade'***

***'First job, every job - protect yourself from asbestos'***

***'Think asbestos - first job, every job'***

The strap-lines generated a mixed response and each performed differently, not only in terms their overall impact but also whether they connected with respondents practically or emotionally.

*'Don't lose everything to asbestos'* was high impact with it's focus on loss generating an emotional connection but worked less well in conveying a specific action; *'Take asbestos as seriously as your trade'* generated an emotional response too, but had less impact overall; Both *'Think asbestos – first job, every job.'* And *'First job every job - protect yourself from asbestos'* had lower emotional impact, but were more action oriented and direct, providing instructions and a clear reminder what to do.

Therefore overall a strap-line such as 'first job, every job' is likely to work better to embed a new behaviour if used in conjunction with other optimal messaging. Detailed responses to each of the strap-lines are as follows:

***‘Take asbestos as seriously as your trade’***

Indications were that this strap-line would not work well to motivate the audience to consider asbestos more than they do currently.

***Take-out***

Whilst some did understand this line was about ‘taking asbestos seriously, as you do your work’, for most the take-out was not immediate, reducing engagement and impact.

***Engagement***

The comparison between taking work and asbestos seriously was appreciated by some, more so by sole traders/small businesses who connected with the importance of maintaining a professional reputation. However, it was a more typical reaction that respondents were uncertain why the link was being drawn between their attitude to asbestos and their attitude to work. Some of the younger respondents who were more candid about not treating their work all that seriously, disconnected with it in quite a straightforward way; others of different ages found it patronising to make assumptions about their attitudes and mindsets. Further the tone of this strap-line was considered a little too direct and unpalatable. Finally, for those with lower knowledge about asbestos then the motivation to act was even less clear.

*“It’s important, you have to be serious about your trade, so you need to be serious about asbestos”*

[Builder, Thatcham]

*“It’s telling off, a government person”*

[Electrician, Glasgow]

***Don’t lose everything to asbestos***

This strap-line was powerful in providing the audience with a reason to reflect and consider the consequences of their behaviour but there are indications that it would work better as a key message rather than a strap-line.

***Take-out***

In terms of takeout, this tended to be fairly straightforward when seen in the context of the adcept – as a standalone message it was less clear. Respondents interpreted

this as a reference to the potential to lose out on a long and happy retirement, time with their families and ability to maintain their livelihood.

*"For me this one sums it up really. No one wants to lose anything let alone everything"*

[Labourer, Cardiff]

*"Don't lose everything to asbestos that's got an impact with death... Don't come into contact with it because obviously you would lose everything you could lose your life "*

[Labourer, Oldham]

### **Engagement**

With regards to its power to engage, this strap-line created a strong emotional connection. The focus on consequences prompts the audience to consider asbestos more carefully. However, its power to cut through was compromised slightly in that some considered its wording too obtuse and quite vague. Within the adcepts it could also be overlooked and therefore did not effectively move the audience forwards towards taking steps to consider their working practices.

*"I suppose that one's the most striking to me 'Don't lose everything to asbestos'"*

[Joiner, Glasgow]

*"It makes you think of consequences if you just think 'Oh, I'll be fine, I'll just drill this one hole'. And it makes you think about what you might lose in life in 10-15 years when it may catch up with you. That one is probably more hard hitting one because it pulls your family in"*

[Electrician, Thatcham]

### **First job, every job - protect yourself from asbestos**

This strap-line was helpful as suggestive of an action but combined with 'protect yourself' it worked more as a reminder of what the audience already know (that is, to stay away from asbestos) than as a new requirement. There is some risk with this strap-line therefore that it does not sufficiently move the audience forwards towards considering their current behaviour.

### **Take-out**

In terms of take-out, this was very clearly about protecting oneself from asbestos on every single job. Some also understood it to mean that it should be the first thing you do on every job.

**Engagement**

In terms of engagement, this strap-line did work well as a clear directive in terms of action, as well as helping to overcome audience barriers around perceived lack of relevance, that is, it is only relevant for certain jobs. It had a straightforward tone that felt in line with other health and safety messages and so felt relevant to convey this type of message. However, for some respondents engagement was more limited. Some respondents were unclear how to protect themselves, or there were indications that this line might push the audience towards a ‘get the professionals in’ approach rather than prompting the uptake of safe and adequate protective behaviours for themselves. Finally the term ‘first job’ was interpreted in different ways (in terms of whether it meant first job of the day, or first project that you undertake) making the intention of it unclear.

*“Yeah, cos I’d remember that. It’d come into your head”*

[Electrician, Glasgow]

*“I like that one, it’s like something from training”*

[Plasterer, Glasgow]

**Think asbestos - first job, every job**

Respondents considered this to be a new requirement and a first step on the behaviour journey to protecting themselves. In order to maximise take-out and engagement it may be preferable to shorten the line to ‘every job – think asbestos’. The additional benefit is that by reversing the order it is more likely to help reinforce this as routine behaviour.

**Take-out**

In terms of take-out this was considered a reminder to think about asbestos as standard on every job they undertake. As with the previous strap-line, there was similar confusion around the term ‘first job’ as described above, for example, did this mean the first thing you do in the morning, or the first job you undertake?

*“Well that says it all, that’s what you have to do”*

[Painter & Decorator, Cardiff]

*“First job every job stands out...on sites now and some companies have like a very simple slogan - right first time, every time”*

[Labourer, Sole Trader, Oldham]

### **Engagement**

With regards to its ability to engage, this strap-line had impact as a reminder of what to do, and helped challenge any ambivalence about perceived lack of relevance. The straightforward tone was considered reflective of other similar health and safety messages they receive. For some, however, there was reduced engagement around lack of a clear instruction of what to do, that is, protect yourself.

#### 2.4.1 Other messages and language

A range of additional messages were tested for takeout and impact. Most of those tested proved useful to raise consideration to a greater or lesser extent.

There were three key messages that worked well to imply **the scale of risk as well as delivering an effective ‘how to’**. These were highly effective to help respondents assess whether or not they were at risk in their jobs. These messages might be best used during an initial communications stage, or within PR activity:

Message	Response
<b><i>‘Asbestos is not only in the walls, ceilings and structure of a building - it can also be found in unexpected places like tiles, paint, some lining paper, pipe lagging, boilers, toilet cisterns and guttering.’</i></b>	This was considered practical and <i>helpful</i> information. It provided new and interesting news for some, highlighting asbestos to be in places previously not considered.
<b><i>You can be exposed to asbestos by disturbing any part of a building or its fittings through sanding, drilling, chiselling, sawing and hammering and many other common work activities.</i></b>	Typically respondents were more familiar with this information; however, it still served as a useful reminder and reference.
<b><i>If any asbestos materials are high risk, such as sprayed coatings, insulation and lagging on pipes and boilers - only a licensed contractor can work with these under strict controls. They are too dangerous for you to work on.</i></b>	This was considered useful because it had clear guidelines on when or when not to use a licensed contractor.

*“I didn’t know that, I didn’t know it would be in paint and wallpapers. We strip off wallpaper all the time; especially if you’ve got an old house, you could be stripping layers. That made me think...because stripping wallpaper, I wouldn’t mask up. I would definitely now and wear the throwaway boiler suit and gloves”*  
 [Painter/decorator, Thatcham]

There was one message that **related to other hazards and risks**:

Message	Response
<b><i>Although it takes some time to develop, asbestos is as much of a threat to your safety as electrics and falls and needs to be considered on every job you do.</i></b>	For some, reference to other safety checks helped to encourage them to consider asbestos alongside other risks.  This is likely to be useful to include as part of an information leaflet, supporting a message about using protective equipment and behaviours on every job.

There were seven key messages that helped to convey the **need for individuals to take responsibility for their own safety in relation to asbestos**. These had mixed impact across the respondents, as follows:

Message	Response
<b><i>If there is a chance that asbestos is present, plan the job so you don't disturb it wherever possible. This might involve doing the job in another way.</i></b>	Respondents claimed to know these pieces of information, although they did serve as helpful reminders.  They were also good as reference points for the audience journey by helping to reinforce the planning stage.
<b><i>If you can't avoid disturbing the asbestos don't start work until you have the correct instruction, information or knowledge to do so safely.</i></b>	
<b><i>I realised that actually I was being pretty irresponsible - I wasn't just putting myself in danger but other people I work with too.</i></b>	There was a mixed response to this message. Some were irritated by it, whilst others thought that the danger it posed to <i>others</i> was an interesting point to be asked to consider. It helped frame the danger slightly differently too, and acted as a reminder of other workplace risks.  This type of messaging could be used in a case study context.
<b><i>Employers and tradesmen who don't consider the risks from asbestos and take safe working procedures extremely seriously are negligent as the consequences to them and their workers are life-changing.</i></b>	This was felt to be useful information for employees and for some employers, although sole traders were less motivated.  It is likely to be worthwhile including this in a kit/PR aimed at smaller employers and

	employees in particular.
<b><i>You have a right to ask for PPE. It's always worth it for asbestos risks.</i></b>	There were mixed views on this. Some felt it was useful to encourage them and others, whilst others felt patronised. Again it is likely to be worthwhile to include this within a kit or PR as a reminder.
<b><i>The thing I realised is, you just need to think ahead a bit...so you know that you're in control of your own safety on a job.</i></b>	These messages were somewhat useful in reminding respondents of their responsibilities and motivating action, but would be lower priority versus other messages. There is potential to use these messages within PR activity or online.
<b><i>At the end of the day, no-one else is going to step in and stop you from doing the thing that might cause a problem, so you've GOT to make that decision yourself.</i></b>	

Finally, there was one message tested that related to **norming of positive behaviours**:

<b>Message</b>	<b>Response</b>
<b><i>Thousands of tradesmen like you are protecting themselves from asbestos, don't be the one that doesn't.</i></b>	<p>There was a mixed response to this message. Some were motivated by the idea of not wanting to be left out, and some also said this boosted a sense of feeling supported on site. For others though, it was simply low impact.</p> <p>There is a possibility that this type of norming message could tie in to a 'free' kit/app if developed, e.g. X number of people have picked up our free information kit or downloaded our app.</p>

*"At the end of the day, all the responsibility of the health and safety comes back to you. So the lads do need to think like that about asbestos too"*  
 [Painter/decorator, Cardiff]

## 2.5 Call to action

As discussed briefly in Section 1.4 respondents typically indicated they were only willing to undertake *lowest effort/cost option* in terms of responding to the campaign. For example, respondents generally gravitated towards the perceived 'easiest' action. Further they will only take any action if they recognise that this is an issue that is *relevant* to them.

In this stage, respondents were asked which they felt they would be likely to do in response to the messages. For many in this sample they indicated that of the options they were shown<sup>16</sup>, they would be most likely to pick up a free information kit from a trade store, as this felt straightforward and easy to do.

However, there was also interest, in principle, in downloading an app from a good proportion of the Smartphone users (if free). There was also some interest in going on-line for information, but others considered this potentially higher effort and would require a strong 'push' for them to do so. If all are then prompted to take the additional step of buying/downloading Asbestos Essentials, a few may do so, but this is likely to be a minority overall.

Below are detailed responses to potential call to actions.

### 2.5.1 Asbestos Essentials

In both stages, *Asbestos Essentials* was considered to have some value for this audience, although it was generally claimed it would not necessarily be the 'first choice' resource. There is potential to flag up its availability as well as its contents and purpose via PR activity or within the 'kit' (more on this below). There is also some scope to improve usability to help increase its value.

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<sup>16</sup> *Go-online for information, buy a copy of asbestos essentials, download a free copy of asbestos essentials, download a free app, pick up a free information kit from a trade store or send off for a free information kit*



**Awareness**

Overall there was low awareness of *Asbestos Essentials* amongst the sample. No one claimed to have heard of or seen it before.

**Levels of interest**

Across the sample and stages of research, there was a mixed response towards *Asbestos Essentials*.

On examination, some of the respondents generally perceived it to be, in principle, a useful resource, providing a great deal of detail and practical information on the subject of asbestos.

For a small number of respondents there was interest in ordering and paying for a copy of *Asbestos Essentials* to have at their disposal, as this was seen as a comprehensive guide and would allow on-site reference. It felt as though it could be part of the general 'site toolkit' for smaller businesses, i.e. something to keep in the van for easy access or refer to if a problem arose. Although there was some indication that it may not be referred to on a regular basis and only used once a job had started.

*"That book [Asbestos Essentials] would be really useful to keep in your toolbox, just to refer to when you needed it"*

[Joiner, Edinburgh]

*"[The book] would just be good to keep in the van, to be honest"*

[Plumber, Nottingham]

For others the content felt less relevant and somewhat overwhelming (see below on implications on layout and design). There were also some indications that respondents were not confident they would be able to understand or use this effectively without a verbal explanation or practical demonstration.

*"There's no way I'd feel comfortable working with asbestos only having read that book. If I wanted to, I'd get proper training but it's not worth it for me"*

[Caretaker, Manchester]

*"Well it'd be a lot to take in and you'll need a few sessions with it ...too much at once you wouldn't take it in"*

[Electrician, Glasgow]

*"I don't think I'm likely to use that really, to be honest I think it would gather dust in the van"*

[Carpenter, Southampton]

The cost<sup>17</sup> was also cited as a barrier, with some suggestion that free methods of access might prove more appealing for example, downloading it/factsheets or using a free app version. However in terms of downloading Asbestos Essentials, there was a feeling this would be time consuming and without a printer little practical use.

*"No, I'm not going to buy that – why should I buy anything?"*

[Carpenter, Thatcham]

*"I probably wouldn't buy it unless I had an asbestos problem. But there's so much information here...just simple jobs like drilling holes into textured walls which I do all the time. And I think 'Blimey, there's a bloke here [wearing protective suit]...there he is! I never dress like this when I drill a hole in a textured wall. I should do, should I?"*

[Construction Operative, Thatcham]

*"We would expect that to be provided, why should I pay £15?"*

[Labourer, Oldham]

### **Layout and design**

More specifically, in terms of what is working well with *Asbestos Essentials*, respondents reported finding the contents page, and flow charts helpful, as well as the visuals at the front which outline the differences between licensed and non-licensed work. The level of detail was felt to be comprehensive and the task sheets were also considered to be well laid out and full of useful, detailed information. It was also felt to be fairly compact and the ring binder format made access easier, although it should also be noted that it could also feel quite detailed and overwhelming due the number of fact sheets and pages.

*"I like the flow chart at the front, plumbers we are used to working on manuals, and using things like this so that would work well for me"*

[Plumber, Thatcham]

*"If they found a way to make it interesting but still give the information"*

[Plasterer, Thatcham]

*"There's plenty of graphics to show you how to go about it"*

[Caretaker, Glasgow]

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<sup>17</sup> Current cost of Asbestos Essentials is £15

**Potential areas for development**

With regards to areas for development, there were indications that signposting navigability could be improved to aid access and ease of use. This could include for example:

- Tabs for different sections/colour coded sections
- Grouping of task sheets – under common themes/materials/hazard so easier to find
- Differentiating (via colour) information boxes, e.g. ‘Other hazards’, ‘caution’ and ‘essential information’

*“I suppose they could have tabs, that could be helpful. So you can just flip it open to what you need “*

[Carpenter, Glasgow]

*“It’s easy to read...but the letters could be bigger”*

[Joiner, Glasgow]

**2.5.2 Asbestos kit**

Respondents were shown an idea for an Asbestos Safety Kit (information kit) as follows:

**Asbestos Safety Kit**

- New free asbestos safety kit
- It contains
  - Useful information about where asbestos can be
  - A correct type of disposable mask
  - A disposable overall
  - A toolbox sticker reminding you of what to do
  - A discount voucher to buy Asbestos Essentials
  - A discount voucher to buy safety materials from a trade supplier
- Send off for free or pick up at your local trade supplier

Overall, respondents expressed a relatively high interest in a kit. The fact that this resource would be free of charge was appealing to the audience and helped raise interest. The proposed content also appeared useful and many claimed they would be likely to pick one up if it was made readily available, for example, via a trade supplier or employer. However, most said they would be unwilling to send off for such a kit given that this sounded like relatively hard work.

*"They've got to have free stuff in it to make you want to pick it up, like a great pen or an air freshener for the van."*

[Labourer, Cardiff]

*"It's a good idea. It's an incentive to try and get people involved in asbestos awareness. You could pick it up from tool hire shops. You'd want information about where asbestos can be found and about correct precautions. And stickers on your tool box could be a reminder every time you're at work."*

[Plasterer, Birmingham]

*"Well you need disposable overalls don't you, so disposable kit, gloves, a mask obviously. That sort of thing"*

[Bricklayer, Glasgow]

The proposed contents of the information kit were generally considered to be of interest with some elements of greater value than others:

- **Information about where asbestos can be:** This was considered particularly useful.
- **A correct disposable mask (and correct disposable overall):** the mask prompted greater interest than the overalls, but generally speaking these were both appealing additions to the kit. Not only did it feel like a proper 'freebie', but it would also help get the audience started along the behaviour change journey and signpost them clearly to the correct PPE. The only reason as to why this was considered less useful was that it was assumed licensed works would be brought in should asbestos be verified.
- **A toolbox sticker reminding you what to do:** this was considered a helpful reminder, although some respondents were not convinced they would use them or expressed concern that they would be likely to wear off easily. Additional suggestions were made for alternative ways in which to fulfil a 'reminder' role for example pens, air fresheners or key rings, potentially with the key message ('Every job, think/protect asbestos') on it.
- **Discount vouchers for Asbestos Essentials:** there was some interest in this, although still a general reluctance to pay for a copy
- **Discount voucher to buy safety materials from a trade supplier:** there was a mixed response to this proposed content idea. Although generally welcomed, for some it simply drew attention to the fact that an expense was required.

Additional content ideas proposed by respondents themselves included:

- **Five protective actions:** to help outline the ‘how to’ work with asbestos.
- **One page overview of Asbestos Essentials:** to promote Asbestos Essentials and help sell in its value.
- **A visual of how the fibres get into one’s lungs** (as per the ‘Worksafe video’ [see later] and Asbestos Essentials image).

Finally, whilst not specifically mentioned by respondents, these following features are likely to be beneficial to help reinforce the issue:

- Signposting to an app, if available
- A striking picture for easy and instant communication that asbestos will damage your livelihood (e.g. a picture of a younger tradesman on breathing apparatus in a home).
- A short case study with relatively graphic details might also help with this audience who claim that the ‘shock’ factor is important to cut through for them.

*“You need to show the visual of harm, a picture says a thousand words”*  
[Plumber, Thatcham]

### 2.5.3 App

At both stages of the research the potential to use mobile phones and apps with this audience, as a means of communicating around asbestos, was explored. Overall amongst the sample with Smartphones there was some good interest, in principle, in downloading an app to access further information about asbestos. Interest was fairly high, particularly amongst sole traders, as it was considered it could offer easy to access information as they would have their phones on them at all times and could help them to look professional too. As mentioned previously, the app will really need to be pushed towards this audience who are unlikely to put in much effort to seeking it out, for example, using QR codes on a poster or including signposting information in the information kit or via partnership marketing.

*“An app would be really useful, like an idiots guide to asbestos”*  
[Electrician, Manchester]

*“Your phone is always on you. You’re always checking your phone. It’s always there in your pocket. You haven’t got to go back to your toolbox to dig out the book. You don’t have to go to your van to dig out the book. You probably wouldn’t bother. But if it’s on your phone, it’s always there “*

[Electrician, Thatcham]

### **Current usage**

In terms of app usage amongst this audience, they typically were being used in a leisure context. Games news, weather, sports or radio apps were more frequently mentioned across the sample, with some social media apps from younger respondents (including Facebook, Twitter and What’s app).

There were a limited number of work-related apps being used. It did not appear that there were any significant barriers to using apps for work, rather using apps in this way was not top of mind nor actively sought. From HSE research it has been identified that there is also a limited number of work related apps available. The only barrier worth noting was raised by some (younger) employed respondents: that they might get in trouble if spotted on the job ‘checking their phones’ and so they might be less likely to access as well as being less likely to take responsibility for themselves.

Work-related apps that were mentioned covered help with ideas (for example, Dulux, Zalebox<sup>18</sup>), practical advice (for example, a measuring app), help with ordering (for example, Screwfix and Wickes), and gas registration.

### **Potential app content ideas**

These were tested in the second stage only.

#### *BPEC Essentials*

As part of a pre-task, respondents with an iPhone were asked to download ‘BPEC Asbestos app’ – an app which aims to inform users about the risks of asbestos as well as test their knowledge with a short quiz through the app. The app uses a cartoon ‘boss’ discussing the issue with his younger ‘apprentice’.

Elements of the BPEC asbestos app which resonated with those that saw it (and therefore might be worth considering in terms of developing an app) were:

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<sup>18</sup> This is to aid kitchen layout design

- Facts and figures, (including information about buildings before the year 2000 and the number of annual ARD deaths)
- Clear information on risks
- Images of where asbestos is/different parts of building
- Test of knowledge/interactivity
- Links to further information on the internet
- Easy to navigate/simple to use

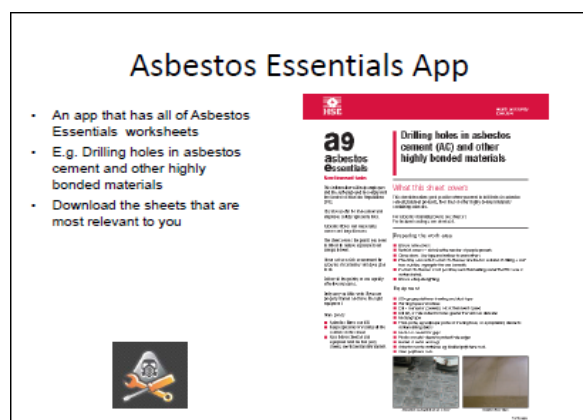
*“The bit I remember is the numbers that die, 4000 odd – I didn’t know that, that really struck home”*

[Plumber, Thatcham]

Elements that worked less well included the cartoon format, which a few considered patronising. Most respondents also claimed that realistically they would be likely to use this app only once as a means to access basic information. Building in ‘how to’ information may therefore be required to help encourage recurrent usage.

### *Asbestos Essentials App*

Respondents were also asked to consider the idea of an *Asbestos Essentials* app. They were asked to respond to a concept board of the idea which suggested an app would be available containing all the Asbestos Essentials fact sheets:



The ‘how to’ components which provided practical advice were considered most useful. These included:

- Practical elements – for example ‘how to work with it’
- All information in one place

- And having the information 'to hand' as required

There were some concerns however that the app would provide information that was too small or hard to read. There was also less interest in it if seen to be identical to the hard copy, indicating it would need an interactive element to drive use.

*"Not sure I'd want that on an app, bit small to read"*

[Plumber, Reading]

#### *BC Worksafe videos*

Responses were also gathered towards two BC Worksafe videos one which focused on damage to lungs and one which focused on demonstrating where asbestos could be.

Overall there was some interest in these as sources of useful information however both videos were considered too long and their 'documentary' style was felt more suited to a training session rather than something they would be interested in watching themselves.

- The *Asbestos Illness* video helped to clarify how the asbestos fibres impact on the lungs, but was considered a little too biological for some. Therefore a simple visual of this process might be effectively used within an HSE developed app or kit to help clarify any current misunderstanding.
- The *House* video worked well as a demonstration of where in the house asbestos might be. The use of the cutaway image was helpful and there is potential to use this to some effect in an app or kit.

### **Response to potential app concepts**

Two app concepts were developed to help increase understanding of what was considered useful for respondents and were tested in the research.

#### *Asbestos Quick Check App*



### Asbestos Quick Check App

- A FREE easy to download app that reminds you what you should always check before you start a job
- 5 simple quick check questions to make sure you are safe in the workplace and you are not taking any risks
- Quick access to what you need to do to make yourself safe should you need to

The ‘5 quick questions’ for use at the start of every job was something that some considered would be useful for respondents to prompt consideration of what they should be doing. However, it was felt that ideally an app would contain more than the above content to make it something that they might look at more frequently, for example what to do next, how to protect themselves.

### *Asbestos Be Safe App*

#### Asbestos – Be Safe App

- A FREE easy to download app that helps you to protect yourself against asbestos
- Includes:
  - 5 easy ‘to dos’ to increase your safety at work – on a job to job basis
  - Top tips from tradespeople like you that are doing it today
  - ‘How to’ videos for common tasks that could disturb asbestos
  - FAQ for easy reference
  - Details of where to go for further information, e.g. Asbestos Essentials

The *Be Safe* app idea was perceived to contain more practical information which was considered important and helpful. Of greatest interest were the ‘how to’ videos, which were considered helpful as providing practical advice; the 5 easy ‘to dos’ which again provided practical information also sounded of value. The details of where to go for more information was thought to be useful, although it may be preferable to include this information within the app to maximise ease of access.

*“The ‘how to’ videos would probably be quite good”*

[Labourer, Oldham]

## Ideal app

The ideal app would be free of charge and focus on asbestos rather than health and safety more broadly. It would also be updated in order to keep the audience engaged. In terms of specific features, the following contents were mentioned by respondents:

- A quick check to act as an easy access reminder
- Key messages, e.g. annual ARD deaths, Year 2000
- Practical information, e.g.:
  - 'How to videos' including protective actions
  - Common materials – pictures and where
- Potentially 'health harms' information
- Search functionality by different criteria e.g. by action, setting and material
- Links to other information

*"In the first instance I want something that lists the materials that it's in"*  
[Carpenter, Thatcham]

*"You probably would use your app – it would be really easy to refer to if it's just on your phone...if you were unsure you would check"*  
[Electrician, Oldham]

*"Yeah definitely, I'd download it, yeah"*  
[Painter/Decorator, Glasgow]

### 2.5.4 Internet

For some respondents, on-line was considered a potential option for finding out more information. However it was often seen by others as higher effort, especially given that asbestos felt like such a low priority. Essentially, respondents felt they were unlikely to remember or be prompted to search for information online that related to asbestos safety when out of the workplace. Further there was some reluctance to print out information as this was felt as high effort. As such, it is likely that they would need to be 'pushed' to this, e.g. when on line rather than necessarily seeking it out on their own accord.

*"I may go online and look at some more information, but beyond that I'm not likely to do anything else. It's not necessary for me and the work I do"*  
 [Joiner, Edinburgh]

### 2.5.5 Training Courses

A few claimed that they may pay to go on a one-day training course. Respondents felt the benefits of doing so would be that the learning would be thorough and 'official', both of which would help to increase personal confidence. For those most interested in this option the cost seemed reasonable. However, others were less convinced of this option, the loss of time and money was not considered to be worth it, and there was some disbelief that they would learn anything new or useful.

*"I don't think I could learn anything more than I already know...after 28 years in the game, I know."*  
 [Electrician, London]

*"I don't think that I would go on a course, it's not just the cost of it, it's a days wages lost too"*  
 [Carpenter, Southampton]

*"[The training course] is definitely something I would do and probably get our lads to do it too"*  
 [Plumber, Nottingham]

## 2.6 Contents of the Campaign

This stage of research also explored potential contents of the campaign to understand which information is likely to be most useful for the audience. Detailed responses to these are outlined below.

### 2.6.1 Key protective actions

Five protective actions were shown to the respondents (see below).

Overall there was mixed knowledge about the key protective actions. Knowledge on some behaviours was relatively high amongst this sample, whilst some behaviours

were new news. There were no real issues with understanding *what the behaviours were asking them to do*, (aside from double bagging). The real confusion was about *when* they should be doing these things.

- *Avoid power tools*: There was a mixed level of knowledge about this, and it was new news for some.
- *Keep materials damp, but not too wet*: Again knowledge about this was mixed, although largely known.
- *Wear a properly fitted suitable mask*: This was the most widely known action amongst the audience overall.
- *Clean up with damp cloth, not brush*: There were a few who did not know this, whilst others generally assumed this was the same as keeping materials damp.
- *Double bag and label*: This was known by some but not all, and started to tip into 'professional territory' for some. In addition, a few respondents found this action more difficult to understand.

*"I know all of those, I know that's what you are supposed to do!"*

[Carpenter, Thatcham]

Overall, the likelihood of the audience actually doing these behaviours seems relatively high, although there were some barriers raised which will be important to bear in mind in terms of developing communications:

- 'Avoid power tools' was felt by many to be prohibitive to working life
- 'Double bagging' materials signalled for some that they should be using licensed operators
- Cost and time were raised (as per Stage 1) as overarching barriers

In terms of queries, these tended to concern what should prompt them to start doing any of these things, and when the actions should be followed. For example: should it be when I know that asbestos is present? Or should I be doing these things even if I don't know that asbestos is present, but think it might be?

*“Never use power tools, you can’t do that can you?”*

[Joiner, Glasgow]

Slight adjustments and clarification to the five protective actions may aid audience understanding perceived value. These include:

- Clarity around when to use ‘licensed’ operators or not
- Clarity about when these actions should be used (or not) e.g. *don’t use a power tool if you suspect it might be asbestos*
- Explaining why the action is important e.g. *drilling into asbestos is really dangerous so if you think it may be asbestos, don’t do it*
- Categorising the ‘actions’ so they don’t overwhelm, e.g.
  - Preparation – e.g. mask and damping down
  - Doing – e.g. power tool
  - Clearing Up – e.g. double bag

It is also worth reinforcing that *all these points* are important so none get ‘missed off’ or forgotten. Respondents were shown some example icons, to see if these would be useful in this context. The use of icons too was considered helpful to communicate the action in a quick and accessible way. Finally, supporting these actions with visuals of asbestos or locations of where asbestos is likely to be found is also likely to prove helpful.

*“Icons are good. Always pay attention to them”*

[Painter/Decorator, Glasgow]

## 2.6.2 Information about asbestos

Respondents were presented with a range of information about where asbestos could be found.

This was considered to be particularly valuable information as well as a useful way to remind them that they are likely to be dealing with it on a daily basis. In particular, the information about exactly where asbestos might be located was treated with much interest. If there is potential to combine the ‘cut away house’ diagram with some visuals of the likely locations, this would have the greatest impact on audience mindsets.

The cut-away house tested well with the sample. Its ability to communicate ‘at a glance’ the key information was welcomed and the fact it shows a typical house was helpful to push the message that domestic properties do pose an asbestos risk. There were some requests for a commercial building version as well.



*“That house is good – showing you all the places, that’s really helpful”*  
 [Plumber, Thatcham]

*“You can see how that’s useful to all trades. You’d look straight to the part of the house where you normally work and see the different places it might be”*  
 [Electrician, Cardiff]

The visual depiction and description of location within a building (as shown on the right) was also of interest to the audience. Pictures were helpful to clarify exactly where it might be and what it might look like. The combination of visual and text was the most useful.

Material	Location
	Cladding Pipe chases/duots Partition panels Ceiling tiles Soffits Fire doors

*“It’s good to have an image of where asbestos is and what it might look like. And it shows that asbestos can take lots of different forms and that it’s available in lots of different products.”*

[Plasterer, Birmingham]

*“That’s helpful, knowing where you may find it...it’s better to have a little picture too”*

[Joiner, Oldham]

### 2.6.3 Case studies

Respondents were asked to read three case studies as well as view two existing HSE case-study videos<sup>19</sup>.

The case studies tested in the research had some impact with the audience (once the issue was considered relevant) and really worked to drive home the key reasons for undertaking protective behaviours. As such, there does appear to be a role for case studies within the campaign material. Radio (if possible) in particular could provide a useful channel through which to dramatise the issue and increase reach.

*“Radio, because it would still work if you could hear his voice, it would still be effective”*

[Plasterer, Glasgow]

There are some considerations however to bear in mind in terms of the format and content of case studies used.

In terms of the length of written case studies, the shorter case studies appeared to be more suited for this audience and could be provided in an information pack. The sample generally demonstrated a low impetus to read, with some finding it more of a challenge than others. This meant that some of the longer written case studies felt too wordy and indications are that the audience would be unlikely to spend the time and effort reading something of this length. There was also some expectation of visuals to illustrate the story.

The videos shown were really powerful at communicating the reality of developing an ARD. However, they were also felt to be a bit too long, and whilst they may work as a ‘pop up’ video online, it is unlikely that this audience would actively seek these out. Similarly there was a low impetus to download or share such a video given that social media (where used) was used for leisure and more light-hearted interactions. The

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<sup>19</sup> <http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/videos/cmorganshort.htm>;  
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/videos/jean-morgan.htm>

only place where these videos were considered likely to be viewed was in the context of asbestos training, where it was felt they would be really effective.

Responses to each of the case studies tested are as detailed below. The case study has been summarised in the description. There were a number of useful components that can be considered in future case studies but the key need is to keep these testimonials very short, even bite-size, and to keep the focus on: this is relevant to you and likely to cause significant damage.

**Case Study 1** *[Chris meets Terry, who has recently been diagnosed with mesothelioma]*

This generally worked well but overall was considered to be a bit too long to be engaging to the end. The use of a peer to peer interaction within the narrative was a useful device to get the audience on board, although for those not in the specific trade mentioned, it could feel less relevant. The mention of the year 2000 stood out and the reference to the fact of only having a year to live after diagnosis, does help to increase the relevance.

*"It's a bit long winded. I wouldn't read all of that...but yeah I can relate to it cause they're talking about a guy who didn't know it was there"*

[Joiner, Glasgow]

*"That one's the most depressing because the guys going to die in a year"*

[Caretaker, Glasgow]

**Case study 2** *[Ben who has changed his working practices]*

This also broadly worked well and although the shorter length was appreciated it was still felt to be too long by some. It demonstrated well how someone had actually changed their working practice which was useful for respondents to be taken through. Other elements of this case study that had good impact, included the reference to the year 2000 again and also the idea of having responsibility to others.

*"In this situation the guy has changed his work practice, a case study like that gives you that information"*

[Labourer, Oldham]

*"Something you all think won't happen to me, there is stuff that you accept like plaster dust"*

[Carpenter, Thatcham]



**Case study 3 [Robert who has mesothelioma]**

This contained some hard-hitting and powerful content, but overall it was far too long and the audience would be highly unlikely to read it. The useful key points it communicated were about the risk that asbestos poses even if you are not directly working with it, that dust can get everywhere and that one's quality of life would be severely reduced with an ARD. Unfortunately however the historical references made the case study feel a little dated and so less relevant to the audience today.

*"Would make people think that even if you're not handling asbestos directly you have to be careful because you still may be exposed to it"*

[Plumber, Birmingham]

**Video case studies**

The video case studies of Christopher and Jean really drove home the message of how devastating an ARD can be. However there was a low propensity reported to download these of their own volition.

Christopher's testimonial was emotionally powerful and often moved respondents; the first person perspective helped to increase its salience. Viewing the clip increased the sense that asbestos is a serious issue, although there was some evidence of reduced engagement given that he had been exposed to asbestos before the health risk was fully known. There were also some requests to make such a testimonial even more hard hitting, for example showing someone using an oxygen mask.

*"Seeing it strengthens the reality of it – it's brutal"*

[Painter/Decorator, Glasgow]

*"That's quite powerful, shocking really"*

[Carpenter, Thatcham]

Hearing the story of Christopher's wife Jean had a strong emotional impact as well, especially amongst the older section of the sample and those with families. There was however less of a connection compared to Christopher's clip and it too could feel overly long. In addition a few also felt that it had less obvious connection to asbestos exposure.

*"Horrible seeing someone's family member. You're getting a perspective – this could be your wife"*

[Plumber, Birmingham]

*"Not being disrespectful to her but she could really be talking about any illness"*

[Electrician, Cardiff]

## 2.7 Messengers and Partners

A range of potential messengers and partners were tested at both stages.

There was an overall expectation and acceptance that messages would 'come from' the HSE. In addition, it was claimed that as the 'authority' in this area they added weight to the message reinforcing the fact that it was serious and something to take note of.

*"I would assume it would come from the HSE, they are there to protect me and my clients so you take them seriously"*

[Plumber, Thatcham]

Beyond the HSE other potential messengers were also explored.

- Those with lower credibility or authority to talk on the matter, and with lower value overall included:
  - websites that rate tradesmen e.g. mybuilder and ratedpeople, as it was claimed they were less likely to visit them
  - as previously, friends, family and children, although some relevance to those with family in the audience and potentially may influence emotionally, however these were considered to have lower expertise on the matter
- Those with higher credibility, but still low value in terms of propensity to get the audience to listen, included: those more involved in health messages e.g. Cancer Research UK, British Lung Foundation and doctors, as well as the figure of the 'boss'.
- Potential messengers with both high credibility and who are likely to engage the audience included: working peers, newspapers such as The Sun, The Daily Mail and the Daily Mirror

**Trade partners** were also considered key as both partners and a channel and were spontaneously suggested by many. As they are currently being used already as sources of advice, there was a recognition that they were a good source of ‘trade to trade’ information. Their catalogues and stores were also recognised as key ‘touch points’ for tradesmen in their day to day jobs. A range of potential partners were shown to the respondents and largely respondents considered these to be suitable partners to work with, with no obvious gaps or key companies missing. In particular, having a *range* of partners was particularly valued in order to broaden reach across a range of different trades.

The expectation was that partners would deliver in-store promotional material (such as posters, leaflets or the information kit) or campaign messaging via hard-copy or online catalogues.

*“Any builders’ merchants would be reasonable partners because everybody uses builders’ merchants. Whatever job you’re on, you’re using Wickes, British Gypsum or Jewsons or Travis Perkins to buy blocks, bricks, timbers, gypsum and so on”*

[Builder, Thatcham]

*“Howdens. Screwfix. Well I mean I go to these all the time, so if there was posters up all around there obviously you’d see them and you’d probably take notice”*

[Joiner, Glasgow]

## 2.8 Channels for Communication

Beyond trade partners, there were a range of other potential channels indicated by this research through which to reach this audience.

### **Media channels**

In terms of **media channels**, this audience are **high consumers of radio**, listening to a variety of station throughout their working day. This included a mix of local, national, BBC and commercial stations. There was a general tendency to seek music or sports commentary/discussion rather than other types of radio broadcasts. As such it was raised that advertising via radio may do well to ‘reach’ them.

*"We have the radio on every job, so you'd probably listen to an advert if it came on there"*

[Painter/Decorator, Glasgow]

*"I think the radio would be your best bet. I don't have time to watch the TV, and I listen to the radio at work all the time"*

[Plasterer, Edinburgh]

Some were accessing trade magazines or picking up free magazines and catalogues at suppliers. Some were also reading newspapers such as Daily Mirror, Daily Mail and The Sun, all of these were considered potential channels for information and communications.

*"On building magazines definitely, because it's buildings isn't it... anybody to do with the building trade... like Screw Fix... in shops, trade counters."*

[Decorator, Nottingham]

*"There's the free trades magazine... Heating and Plumbing... That'd be good because a lot of the lad's read that"*

[Plumber, Southampton]

### **Internet**

In terms of **internet usage**, usage was generally reported around leisure usage. Social media usage was quite low overall and was used for socialising rather than work when it was used (although one mentioned using social media to advertise their services).

However many were using work-related websites (especially sole traders), such as trade sites to source materials and equipment. Examples included: Tradepoint, (B&Q), Screwfix, Toolstation, Heating and Plumbing Supplies and also Gas Safe Register. Some also reported using sites to source information of specific work practices or to seek employment opportunities for example: Plastering.org, indeed.com and ukplasteringforum.co.uk, and as such advertising on trade sites or these specific sites could have some impact. Some mentioned that they looked at blogs or chat forums to garner wider opinions on something, although this was not always considered a credible source of information or guidance.

*"I go to merchant websites when they have special offers on or they send you latest offers"*

[Carpenter, Thatcham]

### ***Work agencies***

Some ad-hoc labourers and contractors mentioned that they use **agencies** to source work citing that this could potentially be a useful channel.

### ***Direct mail***

Direct mail as a channel received a mixed response, with some claiming they would be unlikely to notice. Others however, felt that this would be a low effort way for information to reach them – especially if it were tied in to a trade catalogue or magazine.

*“I think if it came through the door I would definitely read it...if it came in Gas Engineer”*

[Plumber, Southampton]

*“The kit could come with the season catalogues...through the letterbox”*

[Plumber, Oldham]

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