

EASTENDHOMES HARD FIXED FLOORING POLICY

Policy Statement

- 1.1 The absence of a floor covering on a hard flooring surface can lead to increased noise and disturbance to neighbours. This policy is intended to limit nuisance and annoyance to neighbours.
- 1.2 EeH residents are required to keep all floors covered with a suitable floor covering that has noise reducing qualities, for example: a carpet, in all rooms other than their kitchen and bathroom.
- 1.3 Residents will be required to seek permission for the installation of laminate or other types of wooden or artificial hard floor covering.
- 1.4 EeH residents who have installed laminate flooring without the permission of EeH will be offered the opportunity to seek permission retrospectively.
- 1.5 Permission will not be granted unless a Technical Officer from EeH is satisfied that appropriate noise reducing measures will be used in the installation.
- 1.6 Permission will not be refused unreasonably. However, due regard will be given to the effect on neighbours of the use of any floor covering other than carpet or linoleum, the appropriate use of acoustic underlays, method statements provided by the installer, appropriate Building Regulations and any other appropriate building or construction standard.
- 1.7 This policy will be publicised by leaflet which will be sent to all residents and will be available in EeH Local Housing Offices. The Technical Services and Regeneration Departments will also stock a supply of the Defra guide leaflet "Noise from Laminate and Wood Flooring".
- 1.8 The policy will be reviewed every three years.

Background

- 2.1 The main problem with hard flooring surfaces is that footfall (i.e. walking on the floor) can produce significant airborne noise and impact and this can often be a nuisance to neighbours below.
- 2.2 A Building Performance Centre report for the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) (February 2005) found that London, Scotland and the South East are the areas with the highest incidence of impact noise problems. This report also found that

66% of flatted dwellings in England have concrete party floors; a majority of EeH flatted properties have concrete party floors.

- 2.3 The report found that half of all impact noise complaints made to both environmental health departments and social housing providers were about footfall noise.
- 2.4 The report recommends that Tenancy and deed of condition clauses should be used where there are concerns with regard to noise from hard floor surfaces. The report found that the main culprit surface considered to be the most likely to cause problems with impact noise was the laminate floor finish.