



## **Job Application Pack**

### **Asbestos Support Project Benefits Advisor- Part Time**

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***Closing Date for Applications: 1<sup>st</sup> August 2016***

***Interviews will take place in central Birmingham during late August and September 2016***

## Introduction

The West Midlands Hazards Trust is a registered charity which exists in order to relieve poverty and advance education and health in the West Midlands region. We aim to achieve this by educating the public in all matters of health and safety and hazards, in the workplace and in the environment, and by providing support and assistance to those engaged in promoting health and safety in the workplace.

The main work of the Trust is the Asbestos Support West Midlands project. Due to increased demand for its services we are now expanding the project and re-launching it as Asbestos Support Central England. We want to employ a second Benefits Advisor as part of this expansion.

The current project has been operating for over eight years and has helped more than one thousand two hundred individuals and families affected by asbestos related diseases.

Knowledge of the issues which affect people suffering from asbestos related diseases would be useful but is not essential as full training will be provided to the successful candidate. The essential skills for this role are a general knowledge of the current benefits system and an ability to deal sensitively with people experiencing various problems arising from their diagnosis.

Your specific role will be to advise those suffering from asbestos related diseases and their families of their rights and entitlements through home visits and office appointments. Asbestos remains the biggest single cause of work related deaths in the UK. More people die each year of asbestos related diseases than die on the roads. Asbestos Support exists in order to help end the misery these diseases cause. If you can help us make a difference this job is for you.

We hope you will apply for this position and look forward to receiving your completed application form.

## JOB DESCRIPTION – Asbestos Support Project Benefits Advisor

<b>Job Title</b>	Asbestos Support Project Benefits Advisor
<b>Accountability</b>	The post will be line-managed by the Project Manager, who is answerable to the West Midlands Hazards Trust Executive Committee
<b>Location</b>	Birmingham based, travel throughout central England
<b>Purpose of Job</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To advise those suffering from asbestos related diseases and their families of their rights and entitlements through home visits and office appointments</li> </ul>
<b>Duties and Responsibilities</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To conduct home visits and office appointments with sufferers and their families in order to provide information &amp; assistance on benefits and access to civil compensation.</li> <li>2. To provide assistance and representation as appropriate with reconsiderations of decisions, First-tier and Upper Tribunal appeals.</li> <li>3. To provide support and assistance for families at Coroner inquests, if required.</li> <li>4. To develop and maintain sufficient knowledge of the issues faced by users of the service</li> <li>5. To keep and maintain case files and update the cases database</li> <li>6. To work with and liaise with Asbestos Support Groups Forum UK, and work with WMHT to ensure compliance with the Forum's Code of Practice</li> <li>7. To liaise with other statutory and voluntary organisations</li> <li>8. To attend appropriate meetings and functions</li> <li>9. Operate in compliance with WMHT's policies and procedures, helping where necessary to develop these</li> <li>10. Undertake any other duties &amp; responsibilities commensurate with the post</li> </ol>
	<b>Conditions of Work</b>
<b>Rate of pay (NJC scale 5 point 22)</b>	The full time equivalent salary for this post is £20,456 (pro-rata 28 hours per week £15,480).
<b>Holidays</b>	22.5 days per year plus statutory holidays
<b>Pension</b>	The West Midlands Hazards Trust operates a workplace pension scheme and uses NEST as its pension provider. The current employer's contribution

	towards this scheme is 6% of total salary, this may vary over time.
<b>Hours of work</b>	28 hours per week (actual days and times can be negotiated to suit, and any changes agreed within the team, within the aim of providing a consistent service)
<b>Probation</b>	The post is subject to a probationary period of six months.
<b>CRB check</b>	The Benefits Advisor must have an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service. It is not required that such a check be made before the post begins, but that the check be made (if the Project Manager does not already have evidence of recent DBS documentation) as soon as possible during the probationary period. It follows that the offer of an extended contract is conditional on the check being satisfactory.
<b>Training</b>	Although a prior understanding of some of the issues faced by the users of the service would be an advantage, suitable training will be provided where necessary
<b>Other terms</b>	<p>WMHT will endeavour, within the annual budgetary constraints, to provide such terms and conditions as an equivalent local authority worker on the same grade would be entitled to.</p> <p>It is not possible to pay overtime, but Time Off in Lieu for attending evening and weekend meetings and out-of-hours work should be applied. Flexibility is possible, insofar as it is consistent with the smooth day-to-day running of the project, with staff and key volunteers expected to work as a team to that end.</p>

### Person Specification – Asbestos Support WM Benefits Advisor

Candidates are expected to be able to demonstrate the following experience, skills, knowledge & commitment, on the application form and some of the below at an interview. Experience can include voluntary as well as paid work.

	Essential	Desirable
<b>Experience</b>		
Extensive experience in a relevant working environment eg welfare rights	✓	

Provision of counselling (please state level)		✓
Work in voluntary sector or with volunteers		✓
Track record in health & safety at work		✓
<b>Skills</b>		
Excellent communication skills – written & verbal	✓	
Office, IT & administrative skills	✓	
Adaptability/Flexibility	✓	
Ability to drive and possession of a valid driving licence and access to a car	✓	
People skills eg advice/ approachability	✓	
Ability to speak sensitively to people who may have various problems	✓	
<b>Knowledge</b>		
Issues affecting those with asbestos-related diseases, including those with terminal conditions		✓
Welfare Rights & Benefits	✓	
Personal Injury Compensation System		✓
Health service		✓
Knowledge of local communities in the central England area		✓
<b>Commitment</b>		
Equality & equal opportunities	✓	

## **West Midlands Hazards Trust Equal Opportunities Policy Statement**

**Amended and Approved by the West Midlands Hazards Trust on the 13<sup>th</sup> March 2012**

All staff, whatever their working pattern, no matter what their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity status, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, perceived as being any of the above, their migrant or social economic status, part-time working, responsibility for dependants, trade union membership or trade union activity will have the right to be treated on the same basis in fair competition. Harassment, victimisation and bullying are not acceptable and will not be tolerated in the West Midlands Hazards Trust. The elimination of unfair discrimination and prejudice is intended to provide individuals with scope to develop their full potential and to enable the West Midlands Hazards Trust to maximise use of talent.

### **The West Midlands Hazards Trust will:**

- a. Adopt a planned approach to eliminating barriers that discriminate against particular groups.
- b. Give clear guidance to employees on the commitment to equal opportunities.
- c. Recognise its legal obligations under the Equality Act 2012 and as amended 2011 and 2012, the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, the Human Rights Act October 2000, and the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006.
- d. Continuously monitor and review its selection criteria and procedures to ensure that all employees are selected, promoted and treated solely on the basis of merits and abilities that are appropriate to the position.
- e. Promote personal development for all employees, to support their progress within the West Midlands Hazards Trust and, where appropriate, provide specialised facilities, equipment and individual training.
- f. Fulfil its social responsibility towards its employees and the community in which it operates, ensuring that appropriate support is given during times of personal difficulties.

### **Direct discrimination:**

occurs when someone with a protected characteristic is treated less favourably because of that characteristic compared to someone without that characteristic.

### **Indirect discrimination:**

occurs when an unnecessary rule or practice puts someone at more of a disadvantage because of a protected characteristic.

**Harassment:**

is unwanted conduct relating to a protected characteristic which the recipient finds offensive, intimidating, degrading or behaviour which creates an offensive environment for someone because of a protected characteristic.

**Victimisation:**

occurs when someone is treated less favourably because they have carried out, are believed to have carried out or may carry out a 'protected act'. A protected act is bringing proceedings, giving evidence or making an allegation under the Equality Act 2010.

**Failing to make a reasonable adjustment:**

for a disabled person occurs when employers or service providers do not do things differently in order to meet the needs of a disabled person and where it is reasonable for them to do so.

The West Midlands Hazards Trust regards discrimination, harassment or bullying, as described above, as gross misconduct, and any employee of The West Midlands Hazards Trust who discriminates against any other person will be liable to appropriate action as set out in the West Midlands Hazards Trust disciplinary procedures.

**Employment and Recruitment**

- a) The West Midlands Hazards Trust seeks to take steps to identify and challenge the barriers which discriminate, directly or indirectly harass or victimise, potential and existing staff, both paid and unpaid, and takes positive action to encourage all to develop their full career potential.
- b) Recruitment and selection.
  - i. We are committed to using clear job descriptions and person specifications in recruitment, and to making the recruitment and selection process as objective as possible.
  - ii. These specifications will be drawn up after discussions within the Management Committee and after consultations with outside bodies with experience of applying EOP's to recruitment and selection process.
- c) Application Form and Applicants' Information Pack
  - i. We are committed to sending applicants an information pack. This will comprise a job description, person specification, the Equal Opportunities Policy Statement, a service leaflet, an application form and a monitoring form.

- d) Who is on the Recruitment Panel
  - i. The panel will include people with knowledge and expertise drawn mainly from staff and Management Committee members. It will comprise 3-5 people chosen after discussions within the Management Committee.
  
- e) Short Listing.
  - i. The essential criteria from the person specification will form the basis of short listing.
  
- f) Interviewing.
  - i. Interviews will be based on the criteria in the person specification. Candidates will be judged objectively on their responses.
  
- g) Monitoring.
  - i. A confidential EOP monitoring form will be sent with each application form. These, having been kept separate from the applicant's forms, will be used to produce a profile of applicants in order to improve future recruitment and selection processes.
  
- h) Publicising the Post.
  - i. All posts will be advertised throughout the West Midlands area. Advertisements will be phrased to exclude direct or indirect discriminatory language and conditions of work. All advertisements will include reference to the West Midlands Hazards Trust's commitment to being an equal opportunities employer.

It is the aim of the West Midlands Hazards Trust, in its relationships with its employees and in the provision of its services, not to disadvantage any individual by imposing any conditions or requirements that cannot be fully justified. In pursuance of this policy, the West Midlands Hazards Trust may take special measures/positive action in favour of any group that is currently underrepresented in its workforce. In this it will take account of the Equality Act 2012, the Disability Discrimination Act 1999, the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, the Human Rights Act October 2000, and the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006.

In pursuance of this policy the West Midlands Hazards Trust reserves the right to discipline any of its employees who practice any form of discrimination or victimisation on the grounds of protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act, dual or perceived characteristics or social economic or migrant status.

The West Midlands Hazards Trust will monitor and evaluate this policy on an ongoing basis and inform the employees of its impact.



	Office Use Only App. No.
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**West Midlands Hazards Trust: Asbestos Support project**  
***JOB APPLICATION FORM***

The completed form should be returned to: WMHT Job Applications, Asbestos Support  
West Midlands, 138 Digbeth, Birmingham, B5 6DR or emailed to  
[asbestosinfo@wmht.co.uk](mailto:asbestosinfo@wmht.co.uk) All applications will be acknowledged.

*The deadline for applications to be received is the end of Monday 1<sup>st</sup> August 2016*  
For copying purposes please complete this form in black ink or type

Post applied for: Asbestos Support Project Benefits Advisor

Surname: Forename(s):

Address:

Telephone number (s) :

Email:

Age: Date of Birth:

Do you have a disability that we need to be aware of: Yes/No  
If so, please describe:

If so, do you have any special requirements for an interview?



**Education and Qualifications**

Please give details of schools attended since the age 11, plus details of all public examinations passed with results, any University or College attended, with dates, subjects studied and details of qualifications. Include details of any public examinations taken after leaving school, private study, correspondence courses, etc.

School/College/University	From	To	Subject/Qualification	Results

Other qualifications and skills: please use this space to list anything (e.g. short course) which you consider might be particularly useful in the post applied for.

Organising body	Course details	Date

## *PERSONAL EXPERIENCE*

In this section we would like you to give reasons for applying for this post bearing in mind the job description sent to you. You should provide details of your experience, special knowledge, skills, personal qualities and motivations, which you feel are relevant to this application, together with any other information including leisure interests, activities and community work to which you may wish to draw attention. Please include details of languages spoken and written (please indicate level of fluency). Additional sheets may be attached if necessary; no more than two extra pages please.

**Driving** Please answer this section only if the Person Specification for your post mentions driving: otherwise please write: N/A.

Are you able to drive? Yes/No

Do you currently hold a clean driving licence? Yes/No

Do you have access to your own transport? Yes/No

## REFERENCES

Please provide the names of two people who will be able to give a description of your suitability for this post. Neither should be related and one should be from your present or last employer.

Name:

Name:

Address:

Address:

Position/relationship to you

Position/relationship to you

Telephone:

Telephone:

Do you have any objections to referees being contacted prior to interview or immediately:

**YES / NO**

**YES / NO**

Where did you hear of this vacancy? :

## DECLARATION

To the best of my knowledge the information entered in this form is true and correct.

**Signature of applicant:**

**Date:**



# The West Midlands Hazards Trust

## Job Application Monitoring Form

To ensure the effectiveness of our equal opportunities policy, we ask all applicants to complete the information below but it is not compulsory.

Failure to complete this section will not adversely affect consideration of your application

Forms will only be used for monitoring purposes and will be destroyed after the information has been collated.

**Please tick as appropriate**

Sex             Male                             Female

Age            .....                            Date of Birth            .....

Ethnic origin  Caribbean/African    Asian/African Asian    White/European

Other (please specify) .....

Sexual Orientation  Heterosexual    Gay    Lesbian    Bisexual    Transgender

Do you have a disability         Yes     No

Please specify .....

Religion/ Belief, Please specify .....



## About Asbestos Support Central England

We operate right across central England. We are a project established and run by the West Midlands Hazards Trust. The Hazards Trust is a registered charity, (number 1125322).

## Help with compensation and benefits

We provide expert help and advice about state benefits and compensation schemes as well as practical assistance in the completion of all appropriate paperwork. Our services are free and confidential and we offer home appointments or you can come to our central Birmingham offices.

## Other advice and support

We can provide you with links to other reputable organisations that are able to offer additional help. These include experienced solicitors' firms if you need or require legal advice, and self-help support groups if you want to talk to people going through a similar experience.

## Contact us today – we can help

If you would like more information about what to do if you have an asbestos related disease, please contact us today.

Asbestos Support Central England  
138 Digbeth, Birmingham, B5 6DR  
Telephone helpline: 0121 678 8853  
Email: [asbestosinfo@wmht.co.uk](mailto:asbestosinfo@wmht.co.uk)  
Website: [www.asbestosupportce.org](http://www.asbestosupportce.org)

[Asbestos Support Central England – Helping to end the misery of asbestos related diseases](#)



**asbestos support**  
central england



Providing free and confidential support and advice to those suffering from asbestos related diseases, including

**Mesothelioma**

**Asbestosis**

**Diffuse Pleural Thickening**

**Asbestos Related Lung Cancer**



**Asbestos Support Central England**

Telephone helpline: 0121 678 8853

Asbestos Support Central England is operated by the West Midlands Hazards Trust, a registered charity (number 1125322)



## Asbestos in Central England

Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral which is almost indestructible. Its resistance to heat led to its use in thousands of products, from car batteries to oven gloves; yet breathing asbestos dust can kill.

Amongst those most at risk from exposure are workers in the construction industry, car production, plumbing, carpentry, roofing, boiler maintenance and railway carriage manufacture. Thousands of people worked in these trades in central England and many are now suffering from asbestos related diseases.

### The risks from breathing asbestos dust

Asbestos related diseases can take between 15 and 40 years to develop. The numbers of people suffering are continuing to rise and may not peak for many years. Most sufferers were exposed sometime between 1940 and 1980, but workers are still being exposed today, particularly in the construction industry.

### Smoking and asbestos

Some estimates indicate that smoking increases the risk of developing an asbestos related disease by 92%. If you have been exposed to asbestos dust, it is in your own and your family's best interest to stop smoking immediately.

## Asbestos related diseases



An asbestos fibre is typically 2000 times thinner than a human hair. These fibres bypass the body's defence system and get deep into the lung, where they can cause serious damage. The main diseases associated with asbestos are:

#### Mesothelioma

A cancer of the lining of the lung or abdomen. Its only known cause is exposure to asbestos, although the level of exposure might have been very low.

#### Asbestosis

Scarring of the lung making it difficult to breathe.

#### Asbestos Related Lung Cancer

Exposure to asbestos increases the risk of developing lung cancer.

#### Diffuse Pleural Thickening

The thickening of the lung lining or pleura over a larger area.

#### Pleural Plaques

Localised thickening of the lung lining, a two-layered membrane surrounding the lung.

If you have been diagnosed with these, or any other asbestos related diseases, please ask your doctor to tick the relevant box above and contact us for an appointment today.