

factsheet

Housing and Health

LAND QUALITY AND BUYING OR SELLING A HOME

Many houses in the UK have been built on land that has previously been used for other purposes. To meet the demand for housing old industrial sites such as factories, tips and gasworks have been built on. In the vast majority of cases this is entirely safe. However, when the history of a site emerges during a house sale it can cause untold delays, stress and expense.



During a house sale, solicitors will often carry out an environmental search. If the site has previously been used for anything that may have been likely to generate pollution then this is usually highlighted. Unless the seller has clear evidence to demonstrate that the site is not contaminated, then this can seriously compromise a sale.

How can the Council help ?

In 2004 Charnwood undertook a major project to identify and map all land in the borough that had been used in a way that **may** have caused it to become polluted. We found over 3000 areas of land which we then prioritised based on their likely risk. Since then we have been making investigations into the 141 sites of highest risk.

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The purpose of our investigations are to establish if the land is polluted and if so, how seriously. If the extent of the pollution is such that it poses a significant threat to health then we have powers to act to get it cleaned up.

The information we have collected can be of value in clarifying the risk during a house sale. Often solicitors or mortgage lenders will specifically ask for the Councils opinion on whether land is contaminated before agreeing to a sale or mortgage.

- All the sites we have mapped can be seen on line at <http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/interactivemaps.html> by finding the relevant address on the map and clicking 'Previous Industrial Land'
- Copies of the investigation reports into the 141 priority sites are available for £58 (2007/08 price) from the Council. We can also provide quotes for bespoke reports about individual sites on request
- Our website gives a clear position statement about land quality in the borough which we hope reduces unnecessary fears. <http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/environment/contaminatedland>

If you require more information please contact:

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