

Report Title	RAAC at Frimley Park Hospital
Meeting and Date	Public Board of Directors, 15th September 2023
Agenda Item	11.
Author and Executive Lead	Nigel Foster, SRO New Frimley Hospital Programme
Executive Summary	<p>The Board has been regularly briefed on the issues relating to the presence of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) planks in the structure of Frimley Park Hospital, and received a report in January 2023 which detailed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The background to the presence of RAAC planks in the structure of Frimley Park Hospital • The approach taken to manage and mitigate the safety risks. • The Trust’s response to structural surveys which have been undertaken • The actions taken when immediate structural concerns are identified. <p>Approximately 65% of the hospital is affected by RAAC planks including many of the core areas such as wards, theatres, maternity, the hospital streets, and ICU. It is also present in other buildings on site which were originally residences and more recently used as offices.</p> <p>Safety works have been undertaken since 2012 and there is an ongoing programme of remedial works based on the risk assessments undertaken by our structural engineers. Contingency plans in the event of a RAAC incident are in place, and we have also attended regional emergency planning exercises.</p> <p>The national requirement is to remove all RAAC planks from hospitals which is why, in May, it was announced that we have been included in the ‘New Hospitals Programme’ and will be funded to build a replacement hospital on a new site. This needs to be completed by 2030. Until we occupy a new hospital, it is important that we demonstrate we have appropriate actions in place to maintain safety, and provide assurance to our staff, patients, and visitors.</p> <p>The trust has had a lot of local and national media enquiries following the change in guidance for RAAC planks for schools. We have been signposting the media to the previously published information from our website and board minutes which we have collated in the following resource: https://www.fhft.nhs.uk/your-hospitals/frimley-park/raac-planks-at-frimley-park/</p>

We always aim to be as clear and up front as possible with staff, the public and all stakeholders about RAAC at Frimley Park. While we are all now looking forward to the development of a new hospital by 2030, the latest news highlights how public interest in issues at Frimley Park will continue, especially now that the profile of RAAC in public buildings has been raised significantly.

Following the change in guidance to schools, NHS England wrote to all Trusts (see Appendix). This letter clearly states *“There has been no change in Institute of Structural Engineers guidance, which government has confirmed continues to be the basis of action to manage the situation in the NHS and wider public sector.”* As can be seen from the letter, the focus is less about the identification and management of RAAC, and more about the arrangement in place in the event of a RAAC ‘incident’.

Background

Approximately 65% of Frimley Park Hospital is affected by RAAC planks including many of the core areas such as wards, theatres, maternity, the hospital streets, and ICU. It is also present in other buildings on site which were originally residences and more recently used as offices. Later additions to the site (such as the Emergency Department and Parkside) have not been constructed with RAAC planks.

Gurney Consulting Engineers (GCE) are engaged as the Trust’s professional advisers concerning RAAC planks at Frimley Park Hospital. They maintain a detailed log of every RAAC roof plank and its condition. This is informed by an annual survey of all planks. In addition, planks where previous defects have been found are inspected more frequently. We also request inspections if anything of concern is spotted, and following extreme weather events.



IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING

<p>NOTICED A WALL OR CEILING CRACK?</p>	<p>HEARD SOMETHING IN THE WALL OR CEILING?</p>
<p>SPOTTED WATER WHERE IT SHOULDN'T BE?</p>	<p>NOTICED SMALL PILES OF DUST?</p>
<p>SHAPE OF A WALL OR CEILING CHANGED?</p>	<p>REPORT IT VIA: Ext 154424 (0300 615 4424) <small>for the estates team or on-call engineer (out of hours)</small></p>

We have been communicating with staff about the risks for several years, under the banner “if you see something – say something”. Estates and facilities staff have received additional training, as they often are best placed to spot anything of concern.

All incidents requiring reactive maintenance and support are dealt with immediately and in line with the professional advice from our Structural Engineers (GCE). The majority of planks requiring this work are identified as part of the annual inspection process, and the works have minimal operational impact as they are being dealt with before the situation becomes more critical. Operational teams have been provided with advice of what to do in terms of a more sudden incident requiring evacuation of staff or patients. Much of this is similar to the actions required in the event of an evacuation for other reasons.

	<p>We have undertaken emergency planning exercises with groups of staff, and also participated in a regional exercise.</p> <p>The Trust has spent considerable sums in maintaining the safety of the hospital over the past decade. A major replacement of the external roof covering (costing nearly £5m) was undertaken following an incident in Yellow Street in 2012. Formal funding allocations have been issued to affected Trusts since April 2021. In 2021/22 we spent £7.5m, in 2022/23 £8m, and in the current year we are likely to spend at least £5m. We have demolished and replaced Elm House due to RAAC, and the former residences at the back of the site will be demolished this autumn. Based on the advice of our Structural Engineers we also have a programme of proactive repair and reinforcement for the next two years.</p> <p>The Trust has a RAAC Steering Group which meets monthly and oversees the maintenance work and emergency planning arrangements. In addition there are monthly meetings with the regional/national leads for RAAC. Some of these meetings are on site at Frimley so national colleagues can be fully aware of the situation we are managing. These national meetings also provide opportunity for sharing the learning from other Trusts with RAAC, and the output of the national research led by Loughborough University.</p> <p>In terms of other sites, we have previously reviewed Wexham Park and no RAAC was found, but a further review will be undertaken, just to be absolutely sure. Most of the community sites are overseen by NHS Property Services who are reporting separately to NHS England, but we are not aware of any problems. The ICB is overseeing primary care sites again with no reports of sites that FHFT occupy having RAAC construction.</p>
Issues and Options	<p>We are going to need to live with the RAAC planks at Frimley Park until the new hospital is ready. We know that the deterioration of RAAC planks is generally progressive. Although there are moderate cracks that have not changed over many years, elsewhere additional cracks or extended cracks and defects are found each year. We therefore must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue with the programme of proactive repair and reinforcement works as advised by our Structural Engineers; • Continue to remain vigilant for any sudden changes in the state of the building; • Continue to ensure staff are aware of the situation, and what to do in the event of a sudden incident, up to and including an evacuation of part of the site.
Action	The Board is asked to NOTE the content of this report
Compliance	To ensure health and safety for staff, patients, and visitors