WOOLSAFE NEWS
THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE WOOLSAFE ORGANISATION
Summer 2014

GOING GREEN - A NEW CERTIFICATION
WoolSafe Educational Conference 2014
New Mobile Responsive WoolSafe Website
These are again exciting and busy times for WoolSafe! We are launching two new certification marks, one of which will be filling a long existing gap in the field of green cleaning.

To date the use of our Green WoolSafe Mark is not as widespread as it should be because of the difficulty for British and European chemical suppliers to get green certification on their carpet cleaning chemicals. That obstacle is now removed by our collaboration with ENCO. See page 7 for details!

The new CleanSeal certification is a logical progression of the WoolSafe programme: It will recognise excellence amongst cleaning chemicals for synthetic fibre carpets and rugs.

CleanSeal also provides the necessary proof of good performance, which is a prerequisite for green certification.

The event I personally look forward to the most, is the WoolSafe Educational Conference. Keeping in touch with colleagues and friends is very important in any business, but even more so is continuous learning and keeping up with new developments. This year’s conference will be held at a fantastic venue, right in the heart of the carpet industry. An interesting and informative programme has been put together, and a number of WoolSafe chemical licensees will be there to show their latest products and answer any questions about their chemicals and machines.

Dr. Agnes Zsednai, WoolSafe Managing Director
Moving With The Times

Although The WoolSafe Organisation is essentially a science-based company built on the integrity of our testing and accreditation programmes, the success of the business also depends on effective marketing of the services we offer as well as those of our members and licencees.

The world is evolving rapidly, it never stands still. Even in the relatively short time I have been with WoolSafe the way I work and communicate with clients has changed a great deal.

We must therefore continually look at ways of improving and refining how, where and to whom we target our marketing.

One great example of this is how the public use the internet. With more than half of the UK population now using mobile devices as their primary means of access we have to recognise that this is no longer a marginal number and cannot be ignored.

Two years after overhauling our last website we are now launching a new mobile-responsive site. It is able to recognise the location and device the viewer is using and display information relevant to their region in an optimised format for easy viewing.

Have you changed your website to effectively reach this major market?

To assist members in their efforts to promote their company’s or products’ WoolSafe Approved status we are developing promotional packs for WASPs, WOW Carpet Care Advisors and Product Licensees.

The marketing literature will be free to access in the WoolSafe website member’s area, where members can download and print ready to distribute to their clients. The member’s area will grow over the months and years ahead, so members should log in regularly to see what’s new.

Please take a fresh look at the site and recommend it to your clients as a valuable resource.

More about the new website on Page 10
Goings On

WOW Shines a spotlight on WoolSafe

The Wool Owners Warranty (WOW) launched in January and received a lot of attention in the media, shining a light on WoolSafe Approval.

Several articles and advertisements have appeared in the trade press making a whole new wave of retailers and consumers aware of approved products, the value of using them and the services our members provide.

Point of sale promotional merchandise has reached most carpet retail stores with much more, such as 14,000 pattern books promoting WOW, to be rolled out over the coming months.

WOW and WoolSafe were also promoted by participating carpet manufacturers at the recent Buying Group Show in Solihull. This is now the show most attended by UK carpet retailers.

An opportunity has arisen to extend the WOW offer to one of the largest players in the specialist area of New Build retirement complexes. Each apartment they build will be carpeted and the new owners will be given the opportunity to register for the WOW Warranty.

It is suggested that one cleaner should look after all the leads from one complex so he will be able to tie in several consumer visits in one day and become their ‘cleaning specialist’. This will also give him the opportunity to get to know the new site caretaker with a view to securing regular cleaning of the communal and guest areas.

The first site should be finished in June and we will be able to pre-warn of each site coming live so the local WOW Registered WoolSafe Service Provider can be made aware of the opportunity.
**Domotex, Hannover - Review**

At the beginning of the year WoolSafe Marketing Manager, Steve Bakker was asked to attend Domotex, the largest flooring show in Europe to act as technical advisor at the launch of Wool Owners Warranty.

The WOW initiative was rolled out to carpet buyers, manufacturers and other interested parties and Steve was on hand to answer any questions that arose.

Interestingly, there were many misconceptions surrounding wool fibre care and this proved the perfect opportunity to set the record straight.

Attendees at the meetings were shown the WoolSafe spot removal video series ‘Life's Little Accidents’ and a full explanation of the inner workings of Wool Owners Warranty initiative was given.

Needless to say there was great enthusiasm and a strong desire shown by all present to participate.

During the show good use was made of the UK Trade and Investment and British Wool Marketing Board’s stand which helped to facilitate productive introductions for WoolSafe with UK and European carpet suppliers.

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**ISSA Interclean, Amsterdam - Review**

The beginning of May saw the 25th ISSA Interclean, the “World’s Leading Trade Fair for Cleaning Professionals”. This biannual event in Amsterdam features hundreds of exhibitors in 9 big halls and is visited by cleaning professionals from all over the world. It was a tall order for Agnes to visit the stands of all our European partners to catch up on news; and also to talk to potential new licensees during the two days she spent there.

WoolSafe’s new green initiative was very well received by all, so we have to work extra hard putting on the finishing touches so we can have the first products approved soon.

As usual, there had been a lot of entries for the coveted Innovation Award, some of our licensees, like Kärcher and Diversey being on the short list with Kärcher going on to be category and overall winner with their MopVacB 60/10C.

The innovation Agnes found most interesting was not entered for an award (it is not being manufactured yet), but it will have a big impact on entrance matting, especially in highly sensitive areas, like hospitals and IT manufacturing.

The revolutionary Hungarian invention, JETMAT™, combines the advantages of dirt-stop entrance mats and cleaning equipment, providing an entirely new cleaning solution. This automated cleaning matrix of 1600 cleaning modules per m² is capable of the instant cleaning and drying of any shape of moving surface (from shoe sole to car tyre) by a high pressure water jet followed by air. It is pressure activated and fast working.
WoolSafe will once again be supporting the Carpet Cleaner’s Carnival on the 20th of September at Wicksteed Park, Kettering.

This is currently the only carpet cleaner focused trade show since the demise of CARPEX and deserves the full support of our industry.

Steve will be on hand to answer any questions NCCA members may have about WoolSafe Academy training courses, WoolSafe membership and participation in the Wool Owners Warranty (WOW) initiative.

WoolSafe will be exhibiting again this year at The Flooring Show in Harrogate, one of the few remaining dedicated flooring shows in the UK.

Our stand will have its usual prime location just inside the main entrance where we can meet and greet carpet retailers as they enter Hall A.

We invite all our licensees, members, industry partners and friends to come and visit us to find out more about all the new and exciting developments you are hearing about.

We will be demonstrating how easy the new website is to navigate and explaining more about Wool Owners Warranty to the steady stream of retailers that stop by the stand.

If you are coming on Sunday then be sure visit us in the morning as we will be giving away some free Sunday lunches!

We look forward to seeing you in sunny Harrogate.
The WoolSafe® Organisation has promoted their Green WoolSafe Approved Mark for environmentally-preferable carpet and upholstery maintenance products since 2005. The Green WoolSafe® Mark is awarded to products that, in addition to carrying the WoolSafe® Mark, have also been tested and certified for their environmental credentials under the Green Seal, EcoLogo or EPA's Design for the Environment (DfE) programmes.

Green Seal, EcoLogo and DfE are all based in North America, which has restricted growth of the Green WoolSafe® Mark in other parts of the world.

Despite years of lobbying by The WoolSafe® Organisation, the European Ecolabel organisation still has no category for carpet (and upholstery) cleaning formulations.

So, to stimulate the introduction of tested and approved green carpet cleaning products in the UK and Europe in particular, The WoolSafe® Organisation has decided to take the initiative.

We asked Enco Global Testing Services (EGTS) to develop an environmental testing and certification standard for carpet (and upholstery) cleaning products.

EGTS, based in Bradford, UK, has long-standing and respected roots in the textile industry, initially as the environmental arm of the International Wool Secretariat (IWS) and latterly as the environmental testing and consultancy division of the Confederation of British Wool Textiles.

EGTS operates a dedicated environmental analysis and testing laboratory and provides testing and consultancy to a global customer base. It provides similar services to customers in associated industries and in other spheres, where there is a requirement for environmental testing of products, by-products and waste.
All green standards specify that products submitted for environmental evaluation must meet recognised cleaning and maintenance performance standards too.

At present, this means certification by WoolSafe® or the Carpet and Rug Institute's Seal Of Approval (CRI SOA).

CRI SOA is used almost exclusively by cleaning chemical suppliers based in North America (USA and Canada).

The WoolSafe® approval programme is popular in Europe and other parts of the world, but is aimed primarily at products used on wool carpets, rugs and furnishing fabrics.

However, most cleaning chemical manufacturers also supply maintenance products for use on synthetic carpets and upholstery. There is currently no certification for these products outside North America.

The WoolSafe® Organisation, in consultation with its industry partners, has therefore developed a new testing protocol and performance standard for these cleaning products.

The Enco standard, Environmental Standard for Cleaning & Maintenance Formulations for Textile Floor Coverings, incorporates the latest European cleaning chemical formulation practices, rules and legislation.

It also requires, as the American green standards do, that any product submitted for environmental assessment carries accreditation for having been pre-tested and approved for its efficacy as a cleaning or maintenance agent. WoolSafe® approval, for example is widely accepted for this purpose.

The Standard is currently being discussed and reviewed by leading cleaning chemical suppliers, all of them WoolSafe® Licensees, to ensure that it not only meets all environmental requirements, but also can be implemented by the cleaning industry.
This new standard, *WS 1011 Protocol for the Evaluation and Accreditation of Carpet Cleaning Chemicals for the CleanSeal® Mark*, sets out all the important performance requirements that cleaning agents for synthetic fibre carpets and furnishing fabrics have to meet.

Products that pass all the tests and meet the performance requirements of this new standard will be able to carry the CleanSeal® Mark.

WoolSafe® testing has shown time and again that there are products on the market which their suppliers believe are suitable for the purpose for which they are intended, but they have one or more failings that could cause serious problems in use.

So it is really important, not only for professional carpet cleaners, but also for synthetic carpet suppliers and their customers, that cleaning agents are independently and scientifically tested to the latest industry requirements and standards.

The WoolSafe® Certification Mark has been around for almost 25 years and its success is based firmly on its high standards and strict control, evidenced by the fact that every approved product has to be checked once a year for its continued compliance with these stringent standards.

The CleanSeal® programme is therefore operated and underwritten by WoolSafe®, the one organisation that operates worldwide and has the necessary knowledge and expertise to make CleanSeal® credible and therefore a success.

And to make it easier for chemical suppliers to look seriously at CleanSeal® and benefit from accreditation; *Existing WoolSafe® Licensees qualify for a discount in testing fees.*

Also, products that have been evaluated under the Carpet and Rug Institute’s Seal of Approval programme and carry the appropriate certification, qualify for a substantial discount in CleanSeal® testing fees.

The CleanSeal® Mark and the products eligible to display it will be vigorously promoted around the world.
New website reaches out to mobile users

With ever increasing numbers of consumers now using mobile devices as their primary means of accessing the internet it was critical for WoolSafe to design and develop a new website that is both attractive and user friendly for this audience.

The new woolsafe.org site is user-device responsive and displays in the optimum format allowing buttons, maps and images to be clearly visible and the content to be easily legible at all times whatever device it is viewed on.

WoolSafe.org is one global site making it much easier for users to navigate with all the Approved Products and Service Providers now in one place.

The site recognises where the user is and displays, most prominently, the products and services that are relevant and local to them. However, searches for Approved Products and Service Providers available elsewhere in the world is also much easier now that the previous multi-country sites have been consolidated into a one-stop worldwide site.

The site has been simplified and made more consumer facing with the...
introduction of WoolSafe’s series of stain removal ‘how to’ videos and a stain removal wizard similar to the WoolSafe Carpet Stain Removal Guide Apps.

It is our aim to more effectively channel carpet owners, who come to view these popular tools, towards approved Service Providers, products and Registered Inspectors.

The website will offer a simple translate button for users who don’t read English. WoolSafe Directors and members around the world are invited to test the feature and are encouraged to improve the translation of the site where possible.

A WoolSafe members’ area for use by Approved Service Providers, Registered Inspectors and Licensees will be introduced to the site post-launch. There will be promotional packs containing marketing literature, templates and high resolution images of the WoolSafe Marks.

It is also intended that any material or discount offers that give WoolSafe Service Providers a commercial advantage will be kept in the members’ area and new research, standards and technical information will first appear there before moving into the more public WoolSafe Academy Library or Academy Tech Files.

If you have any articles, research or marketing tips you would like to share with members please submit them to WoolSafe Head Office.

**Embed the WoolSafe TV videos on your website**

‘How to’ videos are the most popular way to learn DIY with YouTube now being the second largest search engine after Google.

If you are a carpet manufacturer, retailer, WoolSafe Approved Service Provider or Approved Product Licensee and would like to use the WoolSafe Stain Removal Video Series ‘Life’s Little Accidents...’ on your website please contact steve@woolsafe.org to request the embed code.

The videos can be viewed on WoolSafeTV on YouTube.
In mid-March Ruth traveled to sunny Jacksonville, Florida where she taught a rug cleaning course to a dozen professional cleaners. The course was hosted by Tripp House of Heirloom Oriental Rug Cleaning, Jacksonville’s only WoolSafe Service Provider.

Other Service Provider company owners from around the US attending the course included Mario DiGiovanni of Premier Rug Cleaning, Alex Flores of Reno Oriental Rug Wash, PeeWee Moon of Heirloom Oriental Rugs, Nestor Quaas of Quality Care and Charles Spearman of Certi-Green Carpet Care.

On April 22 Ruth gave a webinar explaining the WoolSafe program to more that 60 web-attendees on Pro-Cleaners network. The Pro-Cleaners Network was conceived in 2006 and launched the first carpet cleaning forum and carpet cleaning message board that was actually LIVE. It now includes programs about other cleaning related subjects, especially rug cleaning.

April 30 to May 2 the Association of Rug Cleaners held their semi-annual conference in Portland, Oregon. Ruth attended the conference along with fellow rug cleaners and WoolSafe Service Providers, Chip Cunningham of Cunningham’s Rug Cleaning, Neil Atkinson of Chase Carpet and Rug Care and Armen Dohanian of Oriental Rug Cleaning Company ARCS outgoing President.

The three-day event included tours of local rug cleaning plants, rug studios and several presentations from nationally renowned rug experts including Leslie Atiyeh.

The Atiyeh family has been hand-selecting Oriental rugs for more than 100 years. They offer a vast collection of hand-made and machine loomed area rugs from around the world.

The WoolSafe Academy will be flying Ruth over to the UK for the October 14-15th Colour Repair course (IICRC CRT) and run a pet urine decontamination workshop at the WoolSafe Educational Conference on the 16th.

More details at www.woolsafeacademy.org
It is with great excitement that we announce this year's WoolSafe Conference. For the first time it will be hosted outside of Yorkshire, and moved to the Museum of Carpet in Kidderminster, the historic home of carpet manufacturing in the UK.

On the 16th of October we will be bringing together our Approved Service Providers, Registered Inspectors, Product Licensees and industry partners for a day of seminars and workshops with the opportunity to network.

A gala dinner is planned for the evening of the 16th at The Granary Hotel. These events are always a relaxed and fun time with many diners meeting for the first time and others having known each other for decades.

The 17th of October is an extra day set aside for tours. Possibilities include a tour of the Museum of Carpet, a brewery tour or a visit to one of the carpet mills (e.g. Brintons)

For more information and a full itinerary visit the WoolSafe Academy website. Look in Classroom Courses and Events to book your place.

The Museum of Carpet is dedicated to the history of Kidderminster's carpet industry. It is the place to come and meet carpet makers, hear the tremendous clatter of working looms and try your hand at designing your own carpet!
A New Business Mould

Adam Jankowski will be explaining to delegates the importance of awareness when cleaners come across mould. Incorrect advice or treatments can lead to large claims and legal proceedings!

Adam will first talk about basic fungal biology, the characteristics of mould and their growth requirements before discussing indoor environments, indoor air quality and levels of contamination.

The main body of the seminar will focus on ‘mould in our workplace’ and the principles of remediation. Adam will use case studies to highlight the issues and explain correct treatments.

A question and answer session is planned to follow on at the end of the presentation so delegates can quiz Adam on any points that they would like to expand upon.

The Truth about Cats and Dogs

There are 27 million pets in the UK with dogs and cats being the animal of choice for pet lovers with over 7.3 and 7.2 million across the UK, respectively. Between 30% and 40% of U.S. households have at least one cat or dog in residence. And although they may be our best friends, they may not be the best for the carpet, rugs, draperies and upholstery in our homes.

Animal urine odor, stains and discolorations are reported as one of the most common consumer complaints with textile furnishings. Between 80-85% of all rugs have some sort of pet-related issue. By becoming a deodorization and decontamination “expert” you can become a “hero” in your client’s eyes as well as making a lot of money in your cleaning business.

Come learn the tricks of the trade from Ruth Travis, the “Rug Lady”, at this year’s WoolSafe Educational Conference. As a pet owner herself and having over 25 years experience in the fabric care industry she’ll give you her perspective on “pee-pee.” Just keep in mind, however, that dealing with urine problems is never as simple as pet owners think or some product manufacturers claim!
Modern Marketing with Mike Philbin

We all need a good kick up the proverbial sometimes and Mike Philbin is the man who has been dishing them out via his much praised ‘Kick Up The Arse Marketing’ programme that he runs at Nu-Life Floor Care in Stockport. The programme has been described as both inspiring and highly motivational.

A second generation floor care specialist, Mike specialises in hard floor cleaning and stone in particular.

The marketing programme that Mike has adopted at Nu-Life has helped to propel the business to the top of their field, running a highly successful multi-van cleaning operation including hard floor cleaning product manufacture and supply.

If you would like to get an insight into how ‘Kick Up The Arse Marketing’ can help your business then Mike will share some tips with you during his seminar at this year’s conference.

Training Dates & Events

WoolSafe training is for everyone whether you are just starting out or have been in the business for decades. The courses we offer are comprehensive and are created and tutored by industry leaders in their respective fields. For more information about training courses, dates and venues in your country visit:

www.woolsafeacademy.org
Beneffect® is a special company, founded by S. Samuel DeAth, a father worried about the health of his immune-deficient son. Today, the company is a world recognized leader in next-generation botanical antimicrobial technology; it is well worth reading their story on: www.benefect.com/US_benefect/US_about_story.php.

Their newly approved product, Beneffect® Botanical Decon 30 Disinfectant is not a cleaner, but a powerful antimicrobial sanitizer, based on natural Thyme Oil. It:

• Kills 99.99% of bacteria in 30 seconds!
• Has a new light scent!
• Is economical!
• Uses Botanical Thyme Oil Active Ingredient

Botanical isn't just in the product name, or just one ingredient, it is the only ALL botanical formula in the industry. Formulated with whole essential oils, not synthesized copies of the chemicals found within the oils - the authentic way is the right way!

Australia's largest manufacturer of quality carpet, Godfrey Hirst is not the first carpet mill to recognise the importance of using WoolSafe Approved products on their carpets - there are many others who insist on it to ensure their product's good appearance for maximum customer satisfaction.

However, Godfrey Hirst has taken an important and historic step by becoming the first carpet mill to launch their very own, WoolSafe Approved carpet stain remover. The appropriately named carpet spotter, SPOT OUT, is a very powerful, but still safe for wool formulation that is able to tackle both water based and oily spillages and remove them before they become permanent stains.

Find it in carpet shops all over Australia!
New Approved Products

Nothing ever stands still at Vax Ltd, the WoolSafe licensee with the widest range of products for consumers! They keep developing new products and re-formulating, further improving existing ones. Their latest approved product is Vax Ultra+ Spring, a fresh smelling addition to their popular, highly efficient Ultra+ range.

Vax Ltd has been manufacturing vacuum cleaners and carpet washers for decades and now joined other similar manufacturers to develop a range of steam cleaners. These domestic appliances are very useful for cleaning hard floors, where the steam generated by the machine loosens the dirt (sometimes with the aid of a detergent), so it can be wiped away by the microfiber cloth at the bottom of the machine.

There is customer demand to use these machines to refresh carpets, so product developers at Vax, who pride themselves on having ALL of their solutions used in carpet care WoolSafe approved, have asked us to test this one too. The Vax Steam Cleaning Detergent is WoolSafe approved for being used in the Vax Steam Cleaning Machine for the ‘freshening up’ of relatively clean carpets.

RPM Chemspec have re-formulated their long established Natural solvent gel spotter, Liqua-Gel™, the original version of which gained WoolSafe approval back in 1992! Unlike other liquid solvents, Liqua-Gel™ will not penetrate the carpet backing and cause delamination. Liqua-Gel™ is a liquid that turns into a gel on shaking, and this special gelling capability helps it to sit on the surface of stain and not being absorbed through the carpeting.

And the others that are not...

New and renewing WoolSafe Service Providers are asked to provide proof of purchase of approved products. We sometimes find confusion as to what is approved with members occasionally listing products we have never tested, let alone approved. A “safe for wool” or even “wool safe” claim on packaging is by no means equivalent to it being WoolSafe approved. Only the products legitimately displaying the WoolSafe certification mark have been independently tested and certified as safe on wool.

Historical approval of a product name does not mean the present formulation would pass all tests now. Similarly, WoolSafe licensees with multiple products will have some approved for wool and some for different uses, so always ask your distributor for the right one.

If in doubt, check the WoolSafe website or the ‘professional products’ section of the WoolSafe Stain Guide app, which are kept up-to-date.
Welcome All New WoolSafe Approved Service Providers!

Mr Robert Reeve
UK Carpet Care Ltd
Ipswich, Suffolk
www.ukcarpetcareltd.co.uk

Mr David Harbottle
Zap-Clean
Macclesfield, Cheshire
www.zap-clean.com

Mr Brian Philbin
Nu-Life Floor Care
Stockport, Cheshire
SK5 7PG
www.nulifefloorcare.co.uk

Mr Robin Wilmot
Carpet Cleaning 4 You
Ruggeay, Bristol
www.carpetcleaning4you.co.uk

Mr Dan Chapman
New Look Carpet Care
Lightwater, Surrey
www.newlookcarpetcare.co.uk

Mr Ian Rochester
Lionheart Cleaning
Amble, Northumberland
www.lionheartgroupne.co.uk

Mr Troy Clement
Chem-Dry Red Dragon
Crosshands, Swansea
www.chemdryreddragon.co.uk

Mr Steven Wilkins
Ideal Upholstery Cleaners
Stockport, Cheshire
www.idealupholsterycleaning.co.uk

Mr Andi Hill
Executive Cleaning Services (SW) Ltd
Plymouth, Cornwall
www.ecs-sw.co.uk

Mr Scott Kempin
Ecoclean Carpet Care Ltd
Loughborough, Leicestershire
www.ecocleancarpetcare.co.uk

Mr Jonathan Widdowfield
JLW Cleaning Services
Stowmarket, Suffolk
www.jlwcleaning.co.uk

Mr Anthony Nash
A+ Cleaning Services
Bussage, Gloucestershire
www.jagpower.co.uk

Mr Tristan Lang
Green Gecko
Wadebridge, Cornwall
www.greengeckoclean.co.uk

Mr Anthony Hopkins
Pristine Clean
Dumfries, Dumfries and Galloway
Scotland
www.pristinecleanonline.co.uk

Mr Phil Hall
Total Leather and Carpet Care
Paulton, Bristol
www.carpetcleaning-bath.com

Mr Fraser Watson
Edinburgh Cleaning Services Ltd
Dalkeith, Mid Lothian
Scotland
www.cleanse.uk.com

Mr Dasos Gonnella
The Persian Rug Cleaning Company
South Kensington, London
www.persian-rug-cleaning.co.uk
If you would like to join our fast expanding global network of WoolSafe Approved Service Providers please visit www.woolsafe.org to find out how.
WoolSafe Research

The Effect of Maintenance on Carpet Appearance
By Dr. Ágnes Zsednai

The positive effect that regular maintenance has on the overall appearance of textile floor coverings is well-known within the cleaning industry. Vacuum cleaning removes accumulated dry soil and lifts the pile, improving appearance to a certain degree. Periodic wet or dry extraction cleaning removes sticky dirt that vacuuming does not.

However, there are still people in positions to influence carpet buyers and owners, who believe that wool carpets don't really need cleaning. In fact, they say once you (wet) clean a wool carpet it will never be the same again – one way or the other.

We therefore designed a set of experiments to see whether we could clearly show the benefits of regular maintenance on the overall appearance of carpet.

Pieces of a light coloured, 80% wool 20% nylon, tufted, cut-pile carpet were repeatedly soiled on the Kappasoil laboratory soiling machine with standard carpet soil. This accurately reproduces the type and level of soiling experienced in real life situations. The machine drops quantities of soil at regular intervals and “walks” it into the carpet. This is called 1 soiling cycle. Duplicate samples of the soiled carpet were then cleaned by different methods and at varying frequencies.

The treatments we compared were:

1. vacuum cleaning only
   1.a after every soiling cycle
   1.b after every 3rd soiling cycle

2. vacuum cleaning followed by professional (wet) cleaning
   2.a after every soiling cycle
   2.b after every 3rd soiling cycle
   2.c after the 9th soiling cycle only

Vacuum cleaning was done by a domestic upright vacuum cleaning machine with a brush to simulate normal domestic routine. For the wet cleaning a professional spray extraction machine and a WoolSafe Approved low foam detergent was used.

To monitor the carpet samples' appearance objectively, we measured their colour at every stage of the experiment with a Minolta colorimeter. Lightness
and darkness are expressed as L values on a scale of 1 to 100, where 1 is black and 100 is white. Typical L values for light-coloured wool carpets are around 70. For each sample the original colour \( L_0 \), as well as the L value after every treatment were determined. From these values we calculated the change in colour (\( \Delta L \)) at every stage of the experiment. \( \Delta L = L_0 - L \), so the bigger the number, the dirtier the carpet looks.

Differences in L values of more than 3 are clearly visible, though if the carpet is viewed without a reference sample, soiling might not be obvious until much more deterioration in colour.

The graphs show the change in colour (\( \Delta L \)) over time after nine soiling cycles. When only vacuum cleaning was used (Figure 1), it only made a difference to the appearance at the beginning of the experiment, but later on just a fraction of the sticky soiling could be removed. It must be noted that vacuuming did remove some of the dry soil from in between the tufts of the pile, which must have a positive effect on the wear of the carpet, but did little to maintain its appearance as regards colour.

![Figure 1](image1)

![Figure 2](image2)
After 9 cycles $\Delta L = 14.5$ and was still rising, whilst in the case when professional cleaning was applied after every soiling (Figure 2), the carpet’s appearance seemed to stabilise, the maximum colour difference being around $\Delta L = 8$, which can be successfully controlled by cleaning.

Similar trends were observed between the vacuumed-only and the wet cleaned samples, when treatment was performed only after every 3rd soiling (see Figures 3 & 4). Here the overall deterioration of appearance was higher, with no sign of the soiling levelling off.

After the first 3 cycles, though the soiling was higher, most of it still could be removed by professional cleaning, but by the end of the tests it could not, and the change in appearance was about 50% more than in the regularly cleaned carpet.

Finally, when we put all the cleaning results on one graph, we could see clearly the difference regular maintenance gives.
Each of the soiling cycles in these experiments delivered a high amount of sticky soil that was worked into the carpet. We calculated that it would be the equivalent of a family of four using a hall carpet for about 4 months.

So Figure 5 shows the effect of cleaning a well-used carpet quarterly, annually or just after 3 years.

Figure 6 shows how the carpet would look over time before being vacuumed or wet cleaned.

So, regular vacuuming – dry soil extraction – is important, but it has to be coupled with periodic deep cleaning (using ‘wet’ or ‘dry’ extraction methods for maximum benefit). Apart from sustaining the overall good appearance of carpeting, it also has a positive effect on hygiene and indoor air quality.
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