

Frequently Asked Questions.

Q. Who can sign up for the Charter?

- A. Construction clients of all sizes in both the public and private sectors, regardless of volume or value. The Charter is applicable to maintenance, repair, refurbishment and new build. Clients may apply for Charter status for the totality of their organisation, or for discrete parts with significant construction programmes of their own.

Q. What does it cost to join?

- A. The annual registration fee is £950 + VAT for UK applicants.

Q. Who can help me put my Improvement Programme together?

- A. The first point to make is that clients should 'internalise' the Charter by appointing a cross-departmental team that has the active support of the CEO. This team should understand how the Improvement Programme can reinforce the client's business objectives and priorities and make Charter initiatives part of normal business planning.

Achilles Information Limited operates a helpdesk that can assist with technical questions regarding the system.

The National Housing Federation has prepared an excellent guide on implementing the Clients Charter. Although this has been prepared for Housing Associations completing the Housing and Mini Charter, it provides valuable guidance for all clients. This is available from the National Housing Federation Publications: 0870 010 7676 or email publications@housing.org.uk.

Q. Will my results be confidential?

- A. The results are held by Achilles Information Limited in a way that ensures anonymity and confidentiality.

Q. Is my organisation eligible to apply for Mini Charter Status?

- A. A Mini-Charter devised for Housing Associations with smaller or occasional construction programmes was introduced at the end of September 2002. The recommended route of 37 cultural criteria questions for larger associations has been reduced to a minimum of 15 indicators and six main KPIs for Mini-Charter clients. The threshold for eligibility for the Mini-Charter is based on the annual estimated construction expenditure of the registering organisation. Organisations that spend less than £1.5 million each year on construction will be able to opt for the Mini-Charter.

Q. How long will the assessment process take once I have completed my plan?

A. Within four weeks of receipt of the Client's performance data through the on-line questionnaire, Achilles will notify the Client in writing of either their successful registration onto the Clients' Charter, or suggest any amendments that may be required to the Clients' information in order to be registered onto the Clients' Charter.

Q. Is information entered onto the website saved as I work through the plan?

A. As you work through the online plan your text will be saved on the current question as soon as you hit the next button. If you are inactive on the online plan for more 30 minutes the system will timeout, this is for security reasons.

Q. When will the annual review take place?

A: The annual takes place on the anniversary of the your Charter Status Award date. Achilles Information Limited will notify you three months in advance of this date to give you opportunity to review you plan; at this point your programme will be opened for you to edit.

Q. Do I have to submit my plan via the website?

A: All improvement programmes should be submitted through the online system.