

A Critical Reflection on the Introduction and
Implementation of a Homeworking Policy in a United
Kingdom Government Department

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A Critical Reflection on the Introduction and Implementation of a Homeworking Policy in a United Kingdom Government Department.

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Abstract

This study provides a critical reflection on the introduction and implementation of a homeworking policy in a United Kingdom Government Department from the perspective of managers and employees. Prior to the introduction of the policy, homeworking had been available on an individually negotiated basis for a minority of individuals. The policy set out the expectation that all employees would work 1-2 days per week from home, the aim being to achieve a change in working methods and a reduction in office space. Within the literature there is a significant amount of research which looks at homeworking when it is available as a perk to certain employees, there is very little research from organisations where it is an expectation applicable to all. The research adopts a phenomenological philosophy and an inductive approach. The research strategy was an exploratory case study using focus groups initially to provide insight into overarching themes and refine and validate questions for subsequent interviews. Employees were segmented into three groups, homeworkers, non-homeworkers and managers for both the focus groups and the interviews. Coding was carried manually to identify themes. The research found despite the clear expectation of homeworking set out in the policy the desired outcome was not achieved. Despite extensive communication about the change employees were confused and interpreted the messages differently. Managers were content to be relieved of the decision making around homeworking requests. Not all employees welcomed the prospect of homeworking and the findings support other research in identifying barriers to homeworking, for example suitability of property and family life. Trust between employees was an issue, with concerns raised about some homeworkers not having enough suitable work to do from home. Finally, the findings show all groups expressed concern about the adverse impact on career progression.

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this research is to provide a critical reflection on the introduction and implementation of a homeworking policy in a United Kingdom Government department based in London, from the perspective of managers and employees. The policy was introduced with the intention of improving ways of working, making better use of office space, and exploiting opportunities offered by better technology in and out of the office thus reducing commuter journeys into London. However, as highlighted by this research, introducing a policy which expects but does not mandate employees to undertake some homeworking, does not guarantee they will comply leading to different interpretations of the policy and its intent.

1.1 The Role of the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics

In 2012 a joint initiative was launched by Government and industry to reduce commuter journeys into London during the Olympic and Paralympic Games by increasing homeworking by employees. During the Games 7-week period, it was estimated up to 800,000 spectators per day would create an additional three million public transport trips each day, an increase of 25%. Central Government recognised it had an important role to play by reducing transport demand from 80,000 civil servants working in London. Ministers identified the opportunity for Civil Service Departments to lead by example, something businesses had specifically requested, alongside ensuring the business of Government could carry on during the Games. This decision to promote flexible working for Civil Servants prompted media attention. The Daily Telegraph reported:

“The Government has set a target for half of all London-based Civil Servants to either work from home, work from another office, change their working hours or alter their route to work during the Games.” (Hall, 2012)

Alongside the aspiration of the London Olympics to deliver long term legacy benefits, it was envisaged that travel reduction by Civil Servants and flexibility in how they worked would remain a fundamental part of Civil Service reform well beyond 2012. Sustainable reform of office usage and a reduction in workspace was particularly important to reduce costs. However, to reduce office space, the Civil Service recognised significant behavioural and cultural change was required around how and where Civil Servants worked, moving away from traditional 9-5 office-based roles and face-to-face meetings.

1.2 The Anywhere Working Initiative

Alongside the work around the Olympics, a further influence on the decision to introduce a homeworking policy was the launch of the Anywhere Working initiative. This was introduced by Transport Minister Norman Baker at the WorkTech conference in November 2011 (GOV.UK, 2012). The initiative was not linked to the Olympics but developed by Microsoft and its Advisory Panel, the Anywhere Organisation. It was business-led, and project-managed, by companies including Microsoft, Business in the Community, Nuffield Health, Vodafone, Nokia and Regus, with the Department for Transport and Transport for London advising. It aimed to encourage organisations, both private and public sector, to adopt modernised working practices, negating the need to always travel to a traditional office to do business or conduct meetings. Although, the initiative was aimed at the private sector and described as a ‘for business by business’ initiative, it was sponsored by Government who encouraged participation from public sector organisations including the Civil Service. Being a traditional organisation reliant on face-to-face meetings, the implications for the Civil Service were significant in terms of the cultural and technological changes required.

1.3 The Policy Intent

The Government Department where this study took place launched their Working Differently initiative in January 2012 based on the need to reduce travel demand in London during the Olympic and Paralympic Games. The internal document which launched the initiative and was quoted in subsequent staff briefings was the Working Differently narrative, it stated the organisation would:

“support all those people who want to work remotely during the Olympics and for this to provide a legacy for how we work in the future. We are looking to positively change our travel by 50% at Games time. This is about requiring staff to reduce the impact of their travel by working from home”

Success in achieving the target was assessed by monitoring numbers of people accessing the electronic security gates each day. However, this only provided an indication as visitors were also included and there was no way of determining whether employees were working from home, other locations or absent. Data showed building occupancy to have decreased by on average 40% across the Games period with some days achieving well above 50%. To encourage remote working, individual teams were challenged to learn new skills to aid remote working and earn medals by, for example, diverting calls from Blackberries to home numbers and organising video-conferences.

The narrative was clear however that this was not just about the period of the Games. It confirmed the change in working patterns required to support the Games would be a catalyst for long term changes in the way employees worked:

“Looking beyond the Games; this work will leave a powerful legacy. It will transform the way we work so that we make the most of the resources and technologies available to us, become more efficient and effective as a workforce and help to reduce our carbon footprint. Ultimately, this means we have to change the way people think about work.”

This statement paved the way for the introduction of a policy outlining the expectations on homeworking:

“As part of the Working Differently initiative which encompasses the provision of technology, reduction in the estate and the policy of homeworking we expect you to work one and up to two days a week (approximately 40% of your working hours) remotely from home”. (Homeworking Policy, Dec 2012)

The policy also stated there would be a reduced number of desks in the London office for employees, requiring teams to work within a reduced desk ratio (Appendix 1). A Board paper outlining the launch of the policy recognised there would be challenges. The unofficial nature of many flexible working arrangements was noted alongside the need for greater consistency:

“we are perceived to be generally supportive of flexible working, and relatively advanced regarding the infrastructure and attitudes needed to support flexible working. However, many flexible working arrangements are informal, and not all areas are as supportive as others. To make the policy a success it is important to move towards greater consistency and organisation wide support”. (Internal Paper, Nov 2012).

The policy was intended to apply to all employees, signalling a change in the culture of the organisation from office-based to embracing remote working, bringing organisational benefits in terms of flexibility and reduced estate costs. The policy introduction coincided with a cross-Government requirement to reduce the amount of Civil Service office space. The organisation's estates function sought to comply by launching a plan to sell 50% of the building for residential use. They referred to the homeworking policy expectation that all employees would undertake some homeworking as being necessary to ensure reduced space could accommodate the numbers of employees.

1.4 Governance and Roles Within the Organisation

Decision making on change projects like introducing the homeworking policy rested with the Board, which was chaired by the head of the organisation and included senior leaders from five business areas; three policy-focussed, one operational and one representing corporate functions (finance, change, human resources (HR) and communications). Before decision papers reached the Board, proposals were developed and senior leaders consulted. In the case of the homeworking policy, it was produced jointly by the heads of finance and change. The Board agreed the proposal to reduce reliance on office space including launch of the homeworking policy and provision of new technology. The Board commissioned the Change Team to work on detailed plans liaising with the Internal Communications Team to produce written and visual messages to accompany the policy launch. Communications were produced in consultation with HR, the Estates Team who managed office space, and the Change Team, to ensure messages were clear and co-ordinated.

1.5 The Launch of the Homeworking Policy

In line with the governance arrangements outlined above, the Board agreed the detailed plan for launching the 'Working Differently' initiative to staff. The initiative comprised the provision of enhanced technology and reduced and remodelled office space alongside introducing the new homeworking policy. The Change Team drafted the detail of the homeworking policy, whilst the Internal Communications Team developed a communications plan. It was launched by the head of the organisation as an internal document entitled the Working Differently Plan. In December 2012 a message to staff (Appendix 2) outlined the external factors which prompted the introduction of the policy and the aims:

"We see this as an opportunity to build on the flexible ways of working that were so successful over the Olympic period, supported by better IT and an improved office layout."

The message also explained the current situation regarding homeworking across the organisation to demonstrate the need for change. It described an organisation where homeworking practices and attitudes varied across teams. Some areas had staff and managers regularly working from home and holding weekly meetings by teleconference. Others had a mix of regular homeworkers and office-based staff and some teams had no homeworkers. The Working Differently Plan introduced the new homeworking policy explaining:

"The organisation recognises that it needs to lead by example on flexible working, and in recognition of this, we are working towards achieving the Government's aspirations for the Civil Service to be an exemplar in flexible working practices. Currently only some have the privilege of working from home, our aim is for a uniform approach across the organisation with everyone undertaking at least one day of homeworking".

Following the initial launch, the Internal Communications Team planned a period of awareness activity leading up to a formal implementation of the homeworking policy in December 2012. From this point, the online guidance and advice was available, and in January 2013 a week-long event included organisation-wide intranet messages, cascade briefings from senior managers to individual teams and corporate information screens, all focussed on expectation of homeworking across all business units. The communications plan outlined how the messages would be reinforced in internal media (Appendix 3). Key messages were included in slide packs for management cascade and discussion with teams. The stated aim of the homeworking policy was:

- To help us improve our ways of working
- To make better use of the space we have
- To exploit the opportunities offered by better technology in and out of the office

Further slides prompted discussion on:

- How we want and need to work
- Where do we need to be to achieve these outcomes?

A Virtual Leadership presentation was also available aimed at managers with teams of remote workers. The guide, written by a senior manager in the organisation with extensive experience of managing homeworkers, covered principles of managing remote teams, how to maintain engagement and the importance of communication. The guide consisted of a PowerPoint presentation for use as the basis of discussion sessions within teams (Appendix 4). There was, however, no detailed guidance available on the implementation of the policy, for example the process for deciding on requests which conflicted with business need, or when and how individual circumstances should be considered, if at all.

Following a week of intensive and co-ordinated communications, support continued in the form of reminders with previous communications available on the intranet. There was, however, no further blanket coverage promoting the policy. This approach was agreed in the Board paper and assumed after the initial roll-out phase and week-long campaign, the initiative would be 'embedded into the organisation's ways of working', removing the need for further promotional campaigns.

The guidance and communications referred to above covered the key points of the policy, however individual employment contracts were not changed to reflect the expectation of some element of homeworking. The detailed terms and conditions of employees' contracts were set out in the Staff Handbook on the intranet. A non-contractual section on flexible working outlined the different types of flexible working available together with the process for applying and the homeworking policy was inserted into this non-contractual section of the Handbook.

1.6 Provision of Resources

The paper presented to the Board included information on the provision of equipment to support the policy. The focus was on improvements to the network including speeding up log-in times and upgrading old office-based technology with larger desk-top screens and multi-function printers for scanning, copying and printing. For homeworkers, it stated that sufficient laptops should be provided by business units from their delegated technology budgets. It was left to the business unit to decide whether to issue one per person or adopt a pool approach, the decision largely depended on their existing stock of laptops. Spending was focussed on

office-based technology because of the need to upgrade outdated and unreliable desktop equipment to align with the vision outlined in the Board paper of fewer desks but in a modernised environment with upgraded computer equipment.

Regarding other equipment, the Board paper confirmed furniture would not be provided for homeworking, unless requested as a reasonable adjustment under the Equality Act 2010, in line with existing policy. Testing of electric equipment used in employees' homes was not mentioned. Legally, employers are required to ensure portable electrical equipment is maintained to prevent danger, how this should be done and the frequency is not specified. Similarly, there was no mention of other health and safety issues such as having a suitable workspace in the home.

1.7 My Role in the Organisation

When I commenced this research, I was the Deputy HR Director in the organisation, however I left after the interview phase. In my role, some employees mistakenly associated me with the homeworking policy because my team advised on other policies, for example sickness absence. Although I had no role in the development or implementation of the homeworking policy, my senior HR position could have presented challenges in undertaking the research, the most obvious being ethical as participants may have assumed the researcher to be an agent of the change (Iphofen, 2011). Starting the research, I thought this perception may be difficult to overcome. However, it was not the case, possibly because the Change Team was widely understood to be responsible for the homeworking policy not HR. This was useful as in the interviews, participants were willing to talk about both the positives and negatives of the policy. In fact, participants were keen to discuss the policy, suggesting they had an agenda in doing so, possibly assuming that in my position in the organisation I could influence future

changes. The willingness to talk resulted in fruitful interviews yielding a considerable amount of information, however the focus of the interviews was unexpected. My aim was to study the impact of the homeworking policy; however, it became apparent that it was not the policy itself but the inconsistency in implementation that participants were keen to discuss.

A challenge of being a senior HR employee and a researcher was reconciling my knowledge of the homeworking policy implementation with the results of the research. Being responsible for employees contracts I knew that changing terms and conditions and contracts was not considered prior to launching the policy, and there was no consultation with the Trade Unions about amending contractual terms to reflect the homeworking policy. The Board paper assumed that as some employees already undertook homeworking, introducing a homeworking policy would be perceived as a welcome benefit. The only policy issue requiring clarification was its interaction with the sickness absence policy requiring additional guidance to be added (Appendix 1).

1.8 The Policy Implementation from my Perspective

I observed the implementation of the homeworking policy within the HR function. As an employee I received the same communication messages as colleagues, and as a manager I received the messages to be cascaded. I was therefore aware of the communications and I discussed them with my team, however I was not aware of how the messages were delivered or received in other parts of the organisation.

Prior to the introduction of the policy, homeworking was available across the organisation in an uncontrolled manner, negotiated on an individual basis. Within HR a variety of flexible

working arrangements were supported, including part-time, homeworking and compressed hours as we were required to lead by example. Although the new homeworking policy was not mandated via a negotiated contractual change to terms and conditions, the organisational expectation that employees would undertake an element of homeworking was clear. In briefing the HR team, the HR Director who was my line manager, said she wished to set an example. She explained that with half the building being sold for development, pressure on desk space would be extreme and therefore she was interpreting the homeworking policy as a requirement. In HR the homeworking policy was therefore implemented as though it was mandatory and employees within HR accepted this interpretation.

Each HR team leader was required to confirm their team was working from home at least one day per week by completing a spreadsheet of working patterns. No HR employee refused to follow the policy, possibly because HR encouraged flexible working prior to the introduction of the policy. In commencing this research, I assumed the rest of the organisation had interpreted the expectation in the homeworking policy as a requirement, as my area had. I was therefore keen to understand how employees perceived the policy and whether they welcomed a policy which meant they no longer had to negotiate individually for homeworking.

The purpose of this research therefore was to contribute to theory on homeworking by undertaking exploratory research into the impact on managers and staff of the introduction of a homeworking policy. The findings however revealed that although the organisation had introduced a policy which expected all employees to undertake an element of homeworking, it was implemented differently across the organisation. It became clear that some areas and individuals interpreted the expectation as a requirement, whilst others saw it as an aspiration

to be followed or ignored. The focus of the research therefore changed to reflect this and became an exploration of how the expectation in the policy was interpreted.

1.9 Summary of the Research Approach

The research was conducted in a department of approximately 1500 employees. Most roles were policy professionals with some operational staff and specialists plus support from HR, Finance and Communications. Grades ranged from administrative staff up to Senior Civil Servants (SCS) with over 40% concentrated immediately below SCS in middle management. The gender split was 63% male and 37% female, 91% worked full time and 9% part-time. There was no data available from the outsourced HR system on age profiles. This study covered staff directly employed by the organisation, but excluded reception, security, cleaning and catering staff.

At the start of this study the research objectives were defined as being:

- To explore how the organisational homeworking policy is conceptualised and implemented by managers and employees.
- To explore the factors which influence the decision to work at home or stay in the office.
- To explore how trust is conceptualised and implemented between managers and employees when homeworking is an expectation.
- To explore the perceptions of how homeworking, when it is an expectation, impacts on career progression.

Due to the nature of the design of the research as an exploratory case study it was possible that additional or different issues may emerge which were not anticipated as areas of interest, or that some issues were not as salient as originally anticipated. Where new areas of interest emerged, which were not addressed in the original literature review, they have been contextualised and the relevant literature considered within the discussion section.

This research commenced with an exploratory phase of three focus groups designed to identify overarching issues, both positive and negative, raised by employees in relation to the homeworking policy. The aim was to tease out information which may not be obvious but worthy of further investigation. The issues identified fed into the second stage of semi-structured interviews. To provide context for the views on implementation which emerged from the interviews, a review was undertaken of the policies, guidance and information available for staff to establish the written expectations of the policy.

The data was analysed using thematic analysis to explore how the homeworking policy was conceptualised and implemented by managers and employees. The analysis explored the factors employees considered when deciding whether to follow the policy expectation and work from home or remain office-based and ignore the policy. It also examined their perceptions of the potential impact of homeworking on career progression.

The different interpretations resulted in an air of confusion, which allowed individual managers and employees to bring their own views and preferences to bear in when deciding whether to comply with the policy. Different interpretations of the policy may have

implications for the organisation in terms of impacting on efficiency, and for individuals in terms of fairness and equity, in turn affecting morale and employee engagement.

1.10 Legislation and Homeworking

Before turning to the literature, it is worth noting the legislation applicable to flexible working and the rights and expectations of employees in the UK. The introduction in legislation of the right to request flexible working also influenced the move by the organisation towards increased homeworking. Although, there is no legislation in the UK related specifically to homeworking, there has been increased focus on family-friendly working practices. Globally, economic demands placed on families with caring responsibilities has seen more families balancing the need for dual incomes with home life, this together with pressure on businesses to become more competitive has seen many organisations introduce flexible working policies (Crosbie & Moore, 2004). A survey by Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development in 2012 (CIPD, 2012) carried out from a management perspective rather than academic research, found 72% of employers who responded felt implementing flexible working practices impacted positively on employees' engagement, and 73% believed it improved employee motivation.

Since 1997, the legislation governing family orientated working practices in Britain has undergone several changes. The support for working families has been further strengthened by directives from the European Union (EU). The table in Appendix 5 summarises the key legislative and policy changes since 1997 related to flexible working for employees.

A specific right to apply to work flexibly was introduced in April 2003 in the Employment Act 2002, applicable only to parents of young and disabled children initially, it was the first-time

parents' rights were enshrined in law. The act also put an onus on the employer to seriously consider flexible working requests. Further changes introduced by the Coalition Government extended this right to all employees from 2014, and required employers to deal with requests in both a reasonable time and manner (Children and Families Act, 2014). Also included was a statutory Code of Practice for employers with guidance on what constitutes 'reasonable'. The recent policy and legislative changes regarding flexible working illustrate how the position for employees has shifted significantly in the period since 2002. Employees now have access to more flexible working patterns. However, their right is only to apply, and with cases considered individually against business need, inconsistencies and different interpretations can occur.

2. Literature Review

This chapter considers key areas of literature relevant to this study. In the literature homeworking can be referred to as teleworking or telecommuting, for this study it will be referred to as homeworking. Initially the chapter will consider literature related to homeworking, its definition, how it has evolved and its relationship to work-life balance. It will then consider literature related to organisational change, policy implementation, and sustaining change. The organisational governance of changes affecting the employment relationship within organisations is also explored, specifically organisational theory as it relates to flexible working. Finally, literature on motivation is examined along with the relationship between homeworkers and their organisation.

2.1 Literature Search

Two core systematic searches were carried out of relevant databases for the specific areas of homeworking and homeworking plus organisational change. For the other areas of literature referred to above, additional searches were undertaken using backwards and forwards snowballing techniques (Wohlin, 2014) due to the difficulty of formulating a meaningful search strings for broad areas such as policy implementation.

An initial literature search was undertaken using One Search, a Lancaster University tool for searching multiple databases. Search terms were tested and refined to identify literature relating to homeworking, as related to flexibility and work-life balance and excluding literature on property management, transportation, geography and environment. Appendix 6 summarises the results of the initial search, from the fifty-one results, further articles concerning self-employed homeworkers and craft workers were sifted out. Articles relating to

knowledge workers were included but not for mobile working for example, sales representatives or utility engineers.

As the theoretical framework for the research is organisational change, a second systematic literature search was undertaken on homeworking and organisational change. Searches were conducted on Emerald, Scopus, PsycINFO and Web of Science individual databases using Boolean format, including the terms telework, teleworking and telecommuting to ensure relevant articles were captured. Initially, no limits were applied for date of publication, language or type of material. Following an initial review, articles were limited to post-2000 to focus on the most recent research, the results are summarised at Appendix 6.

As the research progressed, further searches were undertaken to identify literature on issues emerging from focus groups and interviews for example, communications, trust and the psychological contract. Backward citation snowballing (Wohlin, 2014) or use of citation pearls (De Brún & Pearce-Smith, 2011) was employed as a technique whereby the reference lists of relevant articles were analysed to identify other articles of interest. Forward citation snowballing (Wohlin, 2014) was also used, whereby when a relevant article was located, authors who had also cited the article were identified to determine whether their articles were relevant. Overall thirty-one papers were identified through systematic database searches. However, the only paper to address the introduction of mandatory homeworking as an organisational change was by Harris (2003) suggesting a gap which this research aims to fill. The following sections consider the themes within the broad subject of homeworking which are relevant to this study.

2.2 The Definition of Homeworking

Telecommuting was first referred to by Nilles (1975), whilst Martino (1979, cited in Siha & Monroe, 2006 p.456) and Giuliano (1981) used the terms virtual office and teleworking to describe the practice of working outside the normal workplace but communicating with it using computer based technology or telecommunications equipment. Within the literature, the practice of working at home rather the office is discussed using various terms; e-working, telecommuting, teleworking, remote working, and homeworking are used interchangeably but do not necessarily refer to the same concept. There is however broad agreement on two principles. Firstly, work undertaken in a location remote from the employer's location, including opportunities for employees to work from home instead of a centralised office location (Nilles, 1994; Watad & DiSanzo, 2000). Secondly, employees use of information technology (IT) to undertake work and communicate (Collins, 2005).

Despite the definition above, the exact nature of homeworking varies in the literature depending on the importance of different criteria to researchers, making a precise definition problematic (Sullivan, 2003; Haddon & Brynin, 2005). The type of work being undertaken by the employees in this study is knowledge work. Thus, literature concerned with home based design and selling of craft products was excluded (Baines & Gelder, 2003). Hopkinson, James and Maruyama (2002, cited in Wilks & Bilsberry, 2007, p.169) suggest only 'knowledge' work warrants inclusion as homeworking. However, knowledge work includes mobile working undertaken by, for example, utility engineers (Hardill & Green, 2003) and work carried out on the move (Hislop & Axtell, 2007) therefore for this study, such work is excluded, as is homeworking specifically to reduce commuting (Choo, Mokhtarian & Salomon, 2005).

2.3 Individuals' Reasons for Homeworking

A question for researchers exploring homeworking is why people do it? In their study of determinants of travel behaviour, Lo, van Breukelen, Peters and Kok (2013) examined the motivations of employees for homeworking. They found need for a quiet environment to undertake tasks requiring concentration away from the interruptions of the office, to be a popular reason, supporting the findings of Duxbury and Neufeld (1999), and Fonner and Roloff (2010) although the self-reporting nature of the latter study may have influenced the findings. Using homeworking as a short term occasional undertaking to improve concentration suggests it may be beneficial in terms of productivity, and there are practitioners accounts which support this. However, there is a lack of empirical evidence of improved productivity from regular homeworking (Bailey & Kurland, 2002).

Lo et al. (2013) found homeworking to be undertaken for personal reasons, with the ability to accommodate childcare commitments being the predominant reason. However organisational factors such as financial incentives and culture may also have encouraged homeworking. Homeworking was also found to be undertaken by employees caring for elderly dependents (Gautun & Hagen, 2010). In the organisations studied by Lo et al. (2013) whether an employee engaged in homeworking depended on managerial approval and the ability to access the server from home, in line with findings by Bailey and Kurland (2002). Lo et al. (2013) also found in some cases disapproval by managers was associated with a lack of trust, particularly from older managers.

Homeworkers may seek to improve productivity by escaping the interruptions of the office. However, although such interruptions may affect tasks requiring concentration, they can be

beneficial by acting as catalysts for creativity and transfer of knowledge (Kraut, Fish, Root & Chalfonte, 1990; Hall & Richter, 1990). Thus, when homeworking is used for a variety of daily tasks, as opposed to one-off tasks requiring concentration, it can be a disadvantage. The isolation from casual remarks, and the benefits of face-to-face conversations sparking ideas and developing relationships, may adversely affect individuals and the organisation as Vayre and Pignault (2014) found, although they recommend further research to confirm their findings.

Flexibility over work-life balance is another reason for homeworking. However, the term is broad and individuals have different interpretations depending on the issues important to them (McMillan, Morris & Atchley, 2011). Flexibility may be for managing the requirements of work and family (Tietze & Nadin, 2011), or to achieve flexibility over working hours, breaks and ambient factors (Standen, 2000; Elsbach, 2003). Homeworking can be popular with dual career couples balancing home and family. For example, Grainger and Holt (2005) found 22% of men and 43% of women gave childcare as the reason for requesting flexible working in the UK. More recently the Modern Families Index (Working Families, 2018) found the main driver for flexibility was reconciling work and caring responsibilities, with 46% of fathers and 67% of mothers citing this as the reason for flexible working.

However, past studies have demonstrated that despite the work-life balance argument, women do not necessarily dominate the homeworking population, proportions being almost equally split (Mokhtarian & Salomon, 1997), or dominated by men (Luukinen & Pekkola, 1996 cited in Alizadeh, 2012 p.73). More recently figures published in 2013 showed a 13% increase in people working from home over the preceding five years with over 4 million employees regularly working from home in 2012 (Trades Union Congress, 2013). Of these almost two

thirds (65%) were male, but figures showed most homeworking jobs created since 2007 were filled by women, mainly because the majority (86.8%) of jobs created were part-time (TUC, 2013). Interestingly, recent research from the UK (Working Families, 2018) found 54% of respondents had access to flexible working, but fathers were more likely than mothers to use flexibility to work from home or away from the normal work place with millennial fathers being significant as they sought an improved work and family fit (Working Families, 2018).

2.4 The Influence of Managers on the Implementation of Homeworking

Where organisational policies on flexible working formally allow for latitude in timing and location of work, approval or rejection of the request usually rests with the manager. The role of the manager is interesting because as McCarthy, Darcy, and Grady (2010) observe, giving managers responsibility for HR matters can result in inconsistent application of organisational policies and procedures. Managers who can grant informal access to flexible working arrangements may ignore policies prohibiting their use (Kelly & Kalev, 2006). Equally, managers may restrict access to flexible working which the employer intends to be genuinely available and included in organisational policies. In effect, flexible working becomes unavailable if the manager chooses, either explicitly or implicitly, to refuse (Eaton, 2003; Barnett, Gareis, Gordon & Brennan, 2009). Managerial attitudes can therefore affect the implementation of flexible working policies, leading to inconsistency and irregularity in use. Thus, a focus of this study is how managers and employees interpret a policy promoting homeworking as not just available, but expected.

Drew and Murtagh (2005), in their study of senior managers, found some saw the increased availability of homeworking as a potential problem with non-homeworking employees feeling resentful and under pressure from increased workloads. However, research by Hogarth, Hasluck, Pierre, Winterbotham and Vivian (2001) found employees were unconcerned about possible unfairness of flexible working policies. A study in the US by Kelly and Kalev (2006) examined how managers determined whether to allow an employee to work flexibly. They found flexible working managed as a negotiated perk, only available to valued employees with managers choosing if, and when to allow it, rather than it being available for all employees,

More recent research by Collins, Cartwright and Hislop (2013) found homeworkers could negotiate idiosyncratic deals with their managers to suit their personal circumstances, despite managers having differing views on flexible working and the application of organisational policies, potentially causing unfairness. Fairness is usually viewed as a fundamental component of the psychological contract (Guest, 1998). Thus, allowing homeworkers differing degrees of flexibility suggests comparisons with colleagues would result in the fairness of the organisation being questioned (Lai, Rousseau & Chang, 2009). However, Collins et al. (2013), in their study of female clerical employees, found the ability of employees to negotiate individualised arrangements appeared to cancel out feelings of injustice if the individual achieved the flexibility they desired.

Given the managers exercise control over employees' access to flexible working, a key question is how managers themselves view flexibility. Sweet and James (2013) considered managerial attitudes to flexible working in the finance and insurance sector. They found that although managers held diverse perspectives, attitudes tended towards ambivalence or neutrality, with few managers having a firm conviction that flexible working was either a

benefit or detriment. To make the application and availability of flexible options consistent for employees, Sweet and James (2013) suggested managers with positive attitudes be supported and sceptics presented with evidence of benefits, thus ensuring greater consistency in the implementation of flexible working policies, their conclusions however are only based on the study of one organisation in the sector.

Literature exploring organisations where homeworking is an expectation is sparse. Research suggests that within organisations, homeworking remains a passive initiative rather than a strategy pursued vigorously by senior management (Siha & Monroe, 2006). Harris's (2003) research at a drinks manufacturing company examined the changing relationship between sales teams, who travelled regularly to customers, and managers when homeworking became compulsory. The change was extreme because the employee's home became the designated place of work with occasional office-based meetings. Harris (2003) found embedding work in employees' homes was perceived as a major intrusion into their private lives, over a third of employees reported that homeworking had increased rather than reduced their stress levels. Within a year of introduction, turnover in the sales team had increased from an annual average of 6% to almost 20%, with those leaving generally being the best performing and experienced employees. The case study by Harris (2003) is alone in examining homeworking imposed on employees, it does not provide conclusions capable of being applied more widely, but suggests home as a workplace requires further examination. This study, exploring the impact on office-based employees of a policy which expects homeworking, will contribute to knowledge in this area.

A different approach to increasing flexible working was taken by Best Buy Co., Inc. a retail company with around 3,500 headquarters employees. Unlike the study by Harris (2003) the

company did not impose homeworking but attempted to shift the organisational culture to one where flexible working, including the location where employees worked, was the norm in the organisation (Kelly, Moen & Tranby, 2011). The radical approach was entitled ROWE (Results Only Work Environment), defining a culture where managers and employees could do what they wanted, whenever they wanted providing work was completed (Ressler & Thompson, 2008). Unlike other organisations where managers decide the application of flexible working practices, ROWE empowered employees to decide where they worked without needing managerial permission or notifying the manager. Employees wishing to work traditional hours whilst office-based and those seeking to work unusual hours or homeworking, were equally embraced by ROWE, with no employee penalised in performance evaluations (Kelly et al., 2011). Results from the study demonstrated ROWE increased employees' feelings of flexibility or schedule control, reduced work-family conflict and benefited all employees, whether parents or not (Kelly et al., 2011).

In many organisations, there is a perception that control over ones' schedule of work or flexibility around hours and location is only for privileged employees. Professionals and senior managers often assume control over their working practices as befits their status, with flexible working available to the favoured few (Blair-Loy & Wharton 2002; Kelly & Kalev, 2006). The research by Kelly et al. (2011) into the ROWE initiative found it was possible to expand control of work schedules, including flexibility of location beyond the privileged few without agreement of, or notification to, managers. However, they acknowledged the high degree of flexibility worked in a white-collar environment, and it can aid recruitment and retention, but question whether employees would desire such flexibility during an economic downturn.

Baruch and Nicholson (1997) identified four factors as prerequisites for successful homeworking; the suitability of fit between homeworking and the job, availability of suitable technology, domestic and family circumstances, and the combination of organisational culture and individual attitudes. Ensuring a reasonable balance between employer and employee benefits (Kurland & Bailey, 1999) would appear to be key to achieving employee commitment to homeworking initiatives, rather than assuming homeworking is inherently more liberating and advantageous (Reilly, 2001). In Harris's (2003) study of imposed homeworking, employees cynically saw the predominant liberation to be that of the organisation from expensive accommodation overheads rather than liberation for individuals. As this study is looking at imposed homeworking driven in part by a desire to reduce office space, whether employees view the change as liberating for them or the organisation will be examined.

The relationship between the employee and manager traditionally focussed on a single location (Ball & Wilson, 2000). However, as Halford (2005) states in her study of voluntary part-time homeworking, the development of home as a workplace requires a change in understanding of how power and control operate across different work spaces. The traditional method of management control founded on visibility and presence of the employee is undermined by homeworking and presents managers with the challenge of managing staff who are unseen (Felstead, Jewson & Walters, 2003). If traditionally the identity and authority of a manager is constructed from spatial proximity and filling a specific role (Wiesenfeld, Raghuram & Garud, 1999), then the challenge of homeworking must be addressed either through formal bureaucratic policies, or support and training, or both (Grimshaw, Cooke, Grugulis & Vincent, 2002). Peters and Heusinkveld (2010) studied a range of industries, albeit excluding the public sector, and found where organisations fail to train managers adequately to manage homeworking teams, managers are reluctant to support and advocate

homeworking. This study will consider the training given to managers prior to the launch of the homeworking policy.

Richardson (2010), in her small study within the Canadian hi-tech industry, found managers relied less on formal training, believing management of homeworkers required specific skills only gained from experience. How well an organisation responds to managers' needs depends on whether the focus is on systems and processes or people (Sparrow & Daniels, 1999). This research will explore the challenges managers and employees faced when operating in different workspaces and whether they reflect the challenges identified in the literature. By investigating the impact homeworkers, managers and non-homeworkers, this study aligns with the suggestion by Bailey and Kurland (2002) that future research should consider those affected by homework not just the homeworker. For example, others in the organisation, managers, colleagues and the organisation itself, to build theory and link to previously defined organisational theories.

2.5 Homeworking and Trust

Within organisations the transactional contract between an employee and employer is concerned with tangible benefits of the employment contract which are well defined such as pay and other benefits. There also exists however the relational contract concerned with the less tangible concepts of trust and loyalty (Tietze & Nadin, 2011). Rousseau (1995) recognised the importance of this psychological contract in capturing the mutual obligations of employer and employee.

The introduction of homeworking can impact upon the psychological contract as Mirchandani (2000) recognised in her case study of men and women undertaking professional work from home in both the public and private sector in Canada. She found that homeworkers whilst being trusted to undertake work from home felt vulnerable to the opportunity being withdrawn with little notice and thus the level of trust eroded. Sweet and James (2013) presented descriptive findings from their study of a large employer in the finance and insurance sector which identified the role of managers in allowing access to flexible work opportunities. They found that although flexible work policies may exist managers may not necessarily trust employees to fulfil their obligations and employees could not therefore trust managers to allow consistent access to the opportunities ostensibly available leading to inequality in implementation.

As demonstrated by Sweet and James (2013) the trust element of the psychological contract works both ways and for homeworkers is not just about being trusted to work from home. The psychological contract is not as clearly defined as the transactional contract and therefore vulnerable to threats to its stability particularly from efficiency initiatives as observed by Harris (2003). In her study of the introduction of homeworking for sales staff at a UK drinks manufacturer she found employees felt their trust in their employer had been violated with the introduction of homeworking as a cost cutting efficiency measure. Employees felt a reduction in the level of support provided to them leading to a view that their trust had been violated by the employer.

Trust is not only an issue between employer and employee but also relevant in working relationships between employees. Seers (1989) in his study based in the industrial setting of a small automotive plant, developed the theory of team member exchange (TMX) which

identified the importance of the effectiveness of an employee's working relationship with others in a peer group. Member roles within the group being defined by the reinforcement of reciprocal actions including a level of trust that those actions will be undertaken. This notion of reciprocity and trust was recognised by Golden (2006) in his quantitative study of telecommunications employees undertaking teleworking. His study found the relationships between co-workers could be adversely affected by teleworking, potentially more so than relationships between the employee and manager.

In their empirical study of teleworkers in a large financial institution Workman, Kahnweiler and Bommer (2003) discovered that relationships between co-workers and the level of trust can be adversely affected by the use of electronic media in place of face to face interactions. However, they recognised several other factors to be relevant including the sophistication of the electronic media used, the cognitive styles of individuals and whether the work being undertaken involved interdependencies or isolated tasks undertaken by individuals. The role of the manager allowing or denying access to homeworking opportunities was also highlighted in their qualitative study of female homeworkers by Collins, Cartwright and Hislop (2013). They found managers denied access to homeworking, performing the role of gatekeeper resulting in homeworking becoming a perk negotiated by individuals.

Allowing individuals to negotiate individualised arrangements leads to mistrust developing between those who have successfully negotiated deals and colleagues who have not, and a 'them and us' mentality as described by Tietze and Nadin (2011). For employees, the actions of managers in restricting access to homeworking opportunities are perceived as a failure on the part of the employer to deliver on obligations or promises leading to an erosion of trust

both between the employer and employee and between employees, thus undermining the loyalty which underpins relational contracts in the workplace.

2.6 Homeworking and Work-Life Balance

Flexible working arrangements including homeworking are attractive to employees with caring responsibilities (Lee & Tang, 2015). However, as noted, having control over work location can be restricted to senior managers (Felstead, Jewson, Phizacklea, & Walters, 2002; Clear & Dickson, 2005). In contrast, more recently Tietze and Nadin (2011) and Collins et al. (2013) studied organisations where homeworking was undertaken by clerical employees, and Fonner and Roloff (2010) found homeworking undertaken at all levels in their study of high-intensity teleworkers. However, Leonardi, Treem, and Jackson's (2010) study focussed on proportion of time by location whether home, office, or satellite locations instead of level of work. Unlike other studies, this research examines the impact of an expectation of homeworking on all employees in a traditionally office-based organisation.

Many organisations, particularly larger employers, have introduced homeworking policies in response to work-life balance concerns (Golden, Veiga & Simsek, 2006) or legislative requirements. However, the take-up of policies can vary widely often leading to failure to demonstrate the desired behaviour change (Blair-Loy & Wharton, 2002). Research shows that successful institutionalisation of policies depends upon support from key constituents exercising power in the organisation (Scott & Davis, 2015). Research examining the take-up of work-life balance policies found key constituents can exert a high degree of influence on employers and the successful implementation of policies (Powell, 1999). Mothers, and more recently fathers (particularly those with a working spouse) with caring responsibilities, were

identified as key constituents critical to influencing the successful take-up of work-life balance policies.

If successful cultural embedding of work-life balance policies depends on support from key individuals exercising power (Scott & Davis, 2015), then the use and acceptance of policies may vary within an organisation and be influenced locally by managers and teams. Indeed Blair-Loy and Wharton (2002) found the power of colleagues and managers may be key in influencing an employee's take-up of work-life balance policies, to the extent of over-riding the demands of their own caring responsibilities. This research will examine the view of these groups regarding the expectation of homeworking.

There is an abundance of research examining why and how employers provide work-life balance benefits (Tietze, Musson & Scurry, 2009), however, there is less literature around how employees use work-life balance benefits once available. Analysis of the preferences of employees for types of work-life policies or working patterns are rarely followed by analysis of usage (Wang & Walumbwa, 2007). Policies may be introduced for several reasons, including presentational rather than practical reasons, resulting in limited change in either the organisation itself or employee behaviour (Boxall & Purcell, 2011). In comparison to policies required by legislation, for example maternity and paternity leave, work-life balance policies may be viewed by employees as symbolic (Lee & Hong, 2011). Despite work-life benefits being offered by many employers, they may be viewed differently from other policies and tension may exist between cultural norms in the organisation. For example, if long hours or overtime (Blair-Loy & Wharton, 2004) or the need to be visible (Heatherman & O'Rourke, 2014) are the norm, employees may see flexible working policies as detrimental to their career prospects.

Thus, this study will explore how employees see the impact of a policy expectation of homeworking on career progression.

2.7 Organisational Change Theory

Introducing the homeworking policy was a significant change within the organisation. Therefore, the next section provides a brief review of key literature and theories on organisational change. Successful management of change is a popular topic. However, the approaches and theories available to practitioners and academics can be contradictory, lack empirical evidence, and rely on hypotheses which are unchallenged and therefore do not provide a sound basis for theory (Todnem By, 2005).

In reviewing the literature Van de Ven and Poole (1995) grouped theories of organisational change into four types. Teleological, which assume organisations to be adaptive with change following a cycle of development, implementation, evaluation and learning. Dialectical assume different groups with different interests see change as representing a shift in the balance of power. Life cycle theories see change as a progression of stages, each stage influencing the outcome. Finally, evolutionary theories argue change as a cycle of variations which happen without purpose and are selected and retained based on best fit for the environment and existing resources (Hayes, 2014).

An alternative approach characterises change theories by rate of occurrence, for example Senior (2002) employed rate of occurrence, origins and scale of change. Theories relating to rate of change view change as incremental (Senior, 2002), or continuous (Balogun & Hope-Hailey, 2004) or both (Burnes, 2004; Luecke, 2003). However, the terms incremental and

continuous are used differently to describe the same approach. Discontinuous change can be more economic than a continuous stream of expensive change programmes (Guimaraes & Armstrong, 1998) however critics suggest the benefits are short-lived (Holloway, 2017), and a series of successive, smaller, agreed changes is preferable (Burnes, 2004).

Senior's (2002) second category of theories focusses on the origin of change, whether planned or emergent, a common distinction in the literature (Bamford & Forrester, 2003). Lewin (1947) was an early proponent of planned change. However, his research was not empirical and his theory and other theories of change as planned have been challenged. The concept of refreezing the change being impossible as organisations rarely operate in constant environments (Burnes, 2004).

In contrast to planned change theories and their shortcomings, emergent approach theories see change as a continuous process of adaption, stressing the unpredictability of both internal and external environments. Supporters of this approach developed practical process models and guidance for organisations, but not necessarily founded on empirical evidence, for example Kanter, Stein and Jick's (1992) Ten Commandments for Executing Change. Similarly, Kotter (1995) designed his eight Stage Process for Successful Organisational Transformation without empirical underpinning, and Luecke (2003) suggested Seven Steps for successful change programs. Appendix 7 compares the elements of three models identifying common features. A criticism of the emergent models of change however, is that it is their scepticism of planned change which unites them, rather than agreement on the alternative (Bamford & Forrester, 2003).

2.8 Policy Implementation

As this study considers implementation of a policy change, it is worth considering the literature on policy implementation and outcomes. As Pressman and Wildavsky (1984) first observed, the outcomes of policy changes are dominated by the implementation of the changes. Identifying factors contributing to successful policy change is difficult because as Payne (2008) points out, the context in which the change is implemented is important. Fullan (2009) focussed on analysing the success of policy implementation in education, and concluded even if a policy is successfully implemented there is no guarantee the achievement will last, particularly if it has not been accompanied by culture change.

On approaches to policy implementation, the literature is divided between bottom-up and top-down methods. Early advocates of the top-down approach were Sabatier and Mazmanian (1979) who identified six conditions necessary for effective implementation including clear objectives, strong leadership, resources, and loyalty to the edict. The conditions they identify appear unrealistic, as Matland (1995) points out the priority for most advocates of the top-down approach to policy implementation is clear policies. The top-down approach appears to treat the implementation of policy change as an administrative exercise, taking no account of the politics of the situation. In contrast, the bottom-up approach advocated by Barrett and Fudge (1981) and Hjern and Hull (1982) focusses on individuals nearer to front-line service delivery. They suggest by listening to their views on local plans and strategies and feeding information and insights upwards to senior decision makers, policies can be designed with in-built flexibility to fit the local context. This approach however assumes a high degree of local influence, which is not always the case in organisations.

Recent literature has advocated a dual approach combining the strengths of the approaches outlined above (O'Toole, 2000; Fullan, 2009; Weible, Sabatier & McQueen, 2009). Suggett

(2011) suggests a framework which recognises implementation may vary depending on the type of policy. For example, a bottom up approach may work where the aim is uncontentious but there is lack of clarity about how to realise it. Although, Suggett's (2011) framework can be criticised as not evidence-based, it does provide a starting point for recognising implementation is likely to be more successful when stakeholders at all levels are engaged in development and implementation.

Looking more widely at research into policy implementation, recent theories focus on the complexity of the issue. Recognising policy change involves interactive and dynamic processes making the task of proposing general implementation theories difficult. Wanna, Butcher and Freyens (2010) suggest it is impossible to generate a model which addresses policy implementation. Suggett (2011) is more positive, but simplistic, concluding that acknowledging the complexity allows implementation strategies to be tailored to the context.

2.9 Sustaining Organisational Change

For the theoretical framework for this study, alongside theories of change implementation it is worth considering theories on the sustainability of change. Definitions of sustainability vary, some focus on improved performance, others on the embedding of new processes and policies (Buchanan et al., 2005). Bateman and David (2002) identified five levels of sustainability, the lowest being realisation of benefits which are subsequently lost. The difficulty of sustaining change was identified by Buchanan, Addicott, Fitzgerald, Ferlie and Baeza (2007) who found dependence on managers to embed change in the NHS increased the likelihood that old ways would return when managers left. Hayes (2014) also acknowledged that the management of change affects whether it is sustained. Nilsen (2015) suggests merging multiple theories of change implementation as a way of achieving greater understanding of what drives success.

However, this approach risks masking contrary assumptions relevant to this study. For example, are individuals primarily driven by personal beliefs and motivations or can the prevalent culture set values and norms, thus regulating behaviour at the expense of individual characteristics?

According to Lewin (1947), the behaviour of groups and individuals can be viewed as being in equilibrium by forces either pushing for or resisting change. With positive behaviour supporting change being more likely when the force for change is increased or resistance weakened (Hayes, 2014), it remains to be seen whether managers felt they were facing resistance to the imposed change or support for it and how they reacted, and whether the organisational norms overrode individual characteristics (Nilsen, 2015).

Kotter (1995) recognised the difficulty of sustaining change and observed that managers often prematurely assume the change to be complete, rather than using early successes to continue changing underlying structures. Fine, Hansen and Roggenhofer (2008) suggest that tool kits and other technical attributes of change are often emphasized instead of assessing whether employees and managers are ready and able to adapt and use them. Kotter (1995) identifies two components of embedded change; firstly, providing feedback and promoting examples of new practices making a positive difference. The importance of reinforcing change using feedback was also recognised by Nadler (1993). Secondly Kotter (1995) points out managers move on; for change to stick, successors need to understand and support the change.

2.10 Organisational Governance and Change

Kelly and Kalev (2006) found research into common aspects of employment often ignored how the employment relationship was governed, organisations instead assuming employment contracts to be governed by written policies. The policies being based on criteria defining some employees as being eligible for a benefit and some not. This study seeks to recognise that how the employment relationship is governed, whether by written policies or individualised arrangements for terms and conditions, is important.

Recognising there are work-life balance policies grounded in legislation and others viewed as symbolic (Lee & Hong, 2011), studies in US workplaces have identified a change in the employment relationship, and the emergence of the restructured workplace (Osterman 2000; Handel & Levine 2004). This is characterized by individual negotiation of benefits, as opposed to the legalized workplace where employment terms are hard wired into the organisation through employment policies bordering on legalistic (Piore & Safford, 2005). The contrasts between restructured and legalised workplaces in the US context are worth consideration to understand characteristics present in the workplace in this study, and their impact on work-life balance policies particularly homeworking.

The organisational culture characterized as 'legalized' is built on the notion of employee rights embedded in bureaucratic employment systems based around hierarchies, formalisation and equal treatment (Powell & DiMaggio, 1991). In the restructured workplace two principles are present; market based employment contracts, for example individualised rather than collective negotiations on pay, benefits and working practices including flexibility. Secondly, devolved authority by thinning managerial grades and shifting decision making out from the centre (Cornfield, Campbell & McCammon, 2001). This shift has been due partly to the need to attract and retain employees in an era no longer promising long term job security, and

benefits for employees on a differential basis (Cappelli 1999; Stone, 2004). By the end of the nineties a third of US companies had moved away from pay structures based on time served or seniority to schemes based on performance (Cappelli, 1999). In the UK Civil Service this trend was confirmed in the Chancellor's Autumn Statement in December 2013 (HM Treasury, 2013) which announced the removal of contractual progression for all UK Civil Servants. This change may have come later than in the US or UK private sector, but it demonstrates a key principle of the restructured workplace is present alongside employment contracts enshrined in policies. How employees feel about a policy expecting them to work from home one or two days per week, which is not enshrined as a requirement in centrally negotiated contracts, will be addressed by this study.

The second principle of the restructured workplace, decentralisation of decision making, flatter structures and less hierarchical (Cornfield, Campbell, & McCammon, 2001) has been used to increase both organisational and managerial capacity to meet economic demands for efficiency in the workplace. Within the UK Government, Dive (2004) has been an advocate of delayering, wider spans of control and headroom for managers to operate within. Also, devolvement of accountability for decision making from the centre so managers rather than a centralised HR function are responsible for employee relations decisions. In 2010 the organisation being studied underwent a major transformation exercise based on Dive's (2004) theory resulting in fewer levels of management and more autonomy around decision making. In such a culture, business units should receive fewer policy directives from the centre (Cappelli, 1999). However, this assumes managers have the necessary skills to make the HR decisions they are accountable for (Bond & Wise, 2003). Increased managerial autonomy was an aim of the organisation's transformation, whether this has been achieved in the context of implementing the homeworking policy will be addressed in this study.

2.11 Organisational Theory and Flexible Working

In terms of restructured workplaces (Osterman 2000; Handel & Levine 2004) there is little reference to how the HR decisions operate, particularly decisions on flexible working policies. Osterman (1995) found workplaces with a strong commitment to employees through continuous improvement and team-based Total Quality Management (TQM) approaches were likely to have flexible working policies. What is interesting is not whether modern or restructured workplaces have work-life balance policies, but how they are implemented within the organisation, which is the focus of this study.

How decisions concerning flexible working policies are made may vary depending on where the organisation is on the spectrum between traditional bureaucratic and less hierarchical restructured (Osterman, 2000). As a UK Civil Service organisation subject to collective bargaining on terms and conditions and a lengthy Staff Handbook forming the employment contract, the organisation being studied appears to be towards the traditional end of the spectrum. Kelly and Kalev (2006) looked specifically at the administration of flexible working policies in both legalized and restructured workplaces, and found a common assumption in research that formal organisational policies embed and enact flexible working in a consistent way for all staff or specified groups of staff. Where a policy indicates decision-making is done by managers on a case by case basis, then rather than having a formal right to flexible working the employee discovers what is formalised is discretion, and their only right is to request. This research will examine if, and how decisions were made regarding homeworking where the policy states an expectation.

The difference between the intention of new working practices, including homeworking, introduced by management and the perception of employees is examined by Peters, Poutsma, Van der Heijden, Bakker and Bruijn (2014). Their study builds on the premise that managers' implementation of policies such as homeworking may be perceived differently by employees, and therefore not deliver the intended outcomes. Differences in perception of homeworking are demonstrated by Woolliams and Trompenaars (2013) who collaborated on research with Vodafone UK for the Anywhere Working initiative mentioned in the introduction. They found some employees liked the advantages of homeworking, for example being able to take children to and from school in between checking e-mails, and avoiding a long commute. In contrast, others reported enjoying their commute, the office camaraderie, and going to work for the social aspects was important if one lived in a bedsit.

They conclude that too often organisational change erroneously relies on Lewin's (1947) view that employees have common needs. This research will explore whether the views of participants who are subject to an expectation of homeworking echo the findings of Woolliams and Trompenaars (2013), in which case expecting all employees to want to and be able to homework may be unrealistic.

Towers, Duxbury, Higgins and Thomas (2006) studied the shifting boundaries between office and home, examining both employees and their family's views of homeworking. Employees who used less work extending technology (WET) such as Blackberries, Smartphones and laptops for homeworking said their families disliked them working in what they considered to be family time. Towers et al. (2006) conclude employees whose family disapproves of their homeworking are less likely to do it. Tietze (2005) examined how family units adapt to the introduction of paid employment into the home, and the coping strategies employed within

households. She found that regulatory and self-regulatory acts are used to protect the respective identities of the homeworker and the household, for example the use of traffic light symbols to regulate access of household members to the homeworker. Tietze and Musson (2005) also examined the impact on familial relationships and how social relationships within the household were affected by homeworking when it was a perk. Some households saw established relationships unravelled with the introduction of homeworking. In others, Tietze and Musson (2005) found homeworking was rejected to retain the division between home and work life. Therefore, even when homeworking is a perk, it can impact negatively on home life. How it impacts when it is an expectation will be examined in this study.

Research into the take-up of flexible working policies has assumed low take-up to be due to a problem with policy implementation, in other words, a disconnect between policy and practice (Blair-Loy & Wharton, 2004; Still & Strang, 2003). Research into the usage of family-friendly policies in Britain found that take-up of such policies in British employers has increased, with 58% of men and 49% of women doing so in 2017 (Working Families, 2018). Formalisation via written policies can address inequalities which may occur when decision making is decentralised allowing managers to use their discretion (Bielby, 2000; Sturm, 2001). However, depending on what the policies contain, the opposite may happen. If the formalised policy includes the use of discretion, then in effect unequal access is being accepted and legitimised by the organisation. Thus, flexible working is managed as a negotiated perk only available to valued workers if managers choose to allow it (Kelly & Kalev, 2006). By examining the formal policies and communications for detail on decision-making around homeworking requests, this study will determine whether decisions are made centrally or locally, if managerial discretion exists, and whether it is formalised.

2.12 Communications and Organisational Change

A key element of the homeworking policy launch was the internal communications providing information about the policy and addressing employee questions and concerns. Begley (1998) suggests effective communication are important in addressing uncertainty associated with change programmes, particularly where employees' daily routines are being altered (Jimmieson, Terry, Callan & Barling, 2004). Zimmerman, Sypher and Haas (1996) also acknowledge the importance of communications during change, highlighting the role played by informal communications or the grapevine. Particularly the reliance placed upon it by employees for receiving important messages, many perceiving it to be more reliable than official channels (Harcourt, Richerson & Wattier, 1991). The grapevine was considered important regardless of the quantity of official communications, and even when organisations disseminated copious information, Zimmerman et al., (1996) found employees felt it was insufficient.

The distinction between official channels of communication and the informal grapevine was identified by Bordia, Hobman, Jones, Gallois and Callan (2004) who found where change impacted on employees' jobs or working practices they preferred conversations with colleagues or their teams, finding them more effective in addressing uncertainty than official management messages. The importance of different information sources during change was identified by Hargie and Tourish (2000). Communication strategies which segmented and targeted different issues, addressing them via different channels, were more likely to be successful (Allen, Jimmieson, Bordia & Irmer, 2007).

During periods of change, Self, Armenakis and Schraeder (2007) found change agents within organisations communicate not only decisions but detail on structures, processes, policies and procedures. The complexity of communications during periods of change was examined by Armenakis and Harris (2002) who identified five components of change messages which can influence the effectiveness of communications in driving successful change. The first component, discrepancy, relates to the need for change and the gap between the current situation and end state, with employees requiring persuasion on the need for change (Katz & Kahn, 1978).

Bandura (1986) recognised that the level of confidence of employees in their ability to succeed can influence whether change programmes are successful, and Armenakis and Harris (2002) included this as their second component, efficacy. Employees may recognise the need for change, but believe the organisation is going about it the wrong way. This appropriateness of change is the third component of the model (Armenakis, Harris & Feild, 1999). The fourth component of successful change is commitment and resources to see the project through to completion. For example, in this study the provision of new technology such as laptops and enhanced telephony for conference calls referred to in Intranet updates. Without sufficient resources, employees believe senior managers themselves to be sceptical of, and lacking commitment to, the need for change (Armenakis and Harris, 2002).

In their study of the role of justice in organisational change, Cobb, Folger and Wooten (1995) found employees will assess the possible winners and losers, with self-interest being important. Where self-interest is being threatened, the change is likely to be resisted (Clarke, Ellett, Bateman & Rugutt, 1996). This phenomenon is characterised as personal valence, the final component in Armenakis et al.'s (1999) model, which captures an employee's judgement

on what is in it for them personally when change is being communicated. When preparing for change, L'Etang (2008) suggests assessing the communication culture before implementing change to enable several channels to be used and messages tailored to different audiences (Conrad & Poole, 2005). Finally, Smith and Mounter (2005) note that management communications may provide information to control employees, and are therefore unsuited to providing support and promotion of flexibility necessary for implementing successful change involving the work environment (Tourish & Hargie, 2004). The communications used to support the policy change in this study emphasised the expectation that employees will undertake homeworking. By using expectation rather than mandating, they are not explicitly controlling. However, any flexibility within the policy is not promoted.

2.13 Motivation

Having considered theories of organisational change, this section considers motivation. For employees working from home, motivation to work may be or may not be an issue. From a managerial perspective, lack of direct supervision along with potential distractions, for example domestic tasks or family members, may have a detrimental effect on motivation. Alternatively, employees may experience increased motivation away from the noise and distractions of the office environment.

According to Handy (1993), attempts to explain decisions and actions within the work environment, need to consider the relevant influences and examine the forces within individuals which push them in one direction or another. The theory and analysis of this internal decision-making process forms the body of knowledge carrying the generic title of motivation. Motivation at work involves intrinsic and external factors which influence

employees to work harder. According to Locke and Latham (2004) the factors may influence either the duration of work, for example working longer, the intensity of work or the direction.

Research into motivation in the work environment began with the Hawthorne studies of the 1930s (Roethlisberger & Dickson, 1939) which concentrated on supervision and working conditions. Since then, theory on work-related motivation has tended to focus on specific factors. Argyris (1957) studied the degree of congruence between the organisation's needs and those of the employee. Whereas Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman (1959) focussed on work as a source of satisfaction and how its design could be enriched to increase challenge and motivation. The role of feedback and rewards in motivation was not considered until research by Locke (1977), and Bandura (1986), who also considered individual psychological processes, such as personal goal setting and self-efficacy.

Relevant to homeworking is the concept that motivation is not limited to factors relating to the work being undertaken, social factors are also important. For example, how employees perceive the fairness or justice in the way organisational policies are implemented by managers. Adams' (1963) focuses on distributive justice and its motivational effect, particularly the comparison of inputs and outputs of an individual in contrast to those of others. Distributive justice however is not the sole type of justice within organisations, Greenberg (2000) highlighted procedural justice. He noted that processes used to make organisational decisions affecting employees can impact on employee satisfaction and motivation. The importance of communication in organisational change has already been noted (Armenakis & Harris, 2002), and in their research into reactions to organisational change Kernan and Hanges (2002) discovered employees' views of justice were improved by good communications from managers. Within this research, motivation is relevant in terms of

employees' desire to work when in their home environment and the motivation to fulfill the expectations of the homeworking policy.

Of the many theories covering motivation some have become unfashionable and the field has moved on, however it has progressed in multiple directions making it a rich but complex area with inconsistency in how the term motivation is used (Locke & Latham, 2004). In this research, the term motivation is used to mean the desire to work (Kanfer & Chen, 2016), and the focus is on motivation theories most relevant to the expectation of homeworking in this context, namely theories of social exchange. Proponents of social exchange theory believe that after being treated favourably, individuals have a moral obligation to reciprocate (Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch & Rhoades, 2001). This theory has been applied to explain the relationship between employer and employee particularly in the context of government workplaces (Noblet & Rodwell, 2009; Anderfuhren-Biget, Varone, Giauque & Ritz, 2010). They suggest social exchanges are positive actions by the organisation in the way it treats employees but with the assumption they will be reciprocated. However, the initial positive act must be voluntary and at the discretion of the organisation or manager (Blau, 1964). Thus, Anderfuhren-Biget et al., (2010) found if a government employee's manager undertook an act of goodwill on a voluntary basis it resulted in increased motivation. Examples of such acts can be HR decisions by the manager or fair rewards (Haar, 2006; Gould-Williams & Davies, 2007).

Martinez-Sanchez, Perez-Perez, de-Luis-Carnicer & Vela-Jimenez (2007) found flexible work arrangements can be a positive voluntary action influencing employees to respond because of their discretionary nature and because they give employees something they want, for example a better work-life balance (Bailey & Kurland, 2002). Employees in this study may therefore feel

indebted to the organisation for being allowed to homework, and wish to return the favour through increased effort and motivation to work whilst at home. This will therefore be considered in this study.

2.14 Homeworking and Work-Related Behaviours

In examining homeworking, the relationship of the homeworker to the organisation is important. Hylmo (2006), studied employees' strategies around legitimising the change to a voluntary homeworking programme. She examined how employees relate to different types of work, either in the office or at home, and respond to key organisational communications. She discovered the role of leaders to be key, with employees looking to senior managers for direction and role-modelling new behaviours required. Research by Gajendran, Harrison and Delaney-Klinger (2015) found employees who are trusted to work from home feel an obligation to repay the employer for allowing them to do so. This feeling of obligation is defined by Anderson and Kelliher (2009) as enhanced citizenship, with employees working harder and often longer hours to fulfil the obligation to their employer. However, expecting employees to become homeworkers may not lead to enhanced citizenship, and will be explored within this study.

Employees who are trusted to homework may increase their work output as they feel the need to demonstrate to office-based colleagues that the trust is not misplaced, and they are fulfilling their duties (Dutcher & Saral, 2014). This is relevant as research has found employees who remain office-based whilst colleagues work from home experience an increased workload, and often assume additional responsibilities which would normally be undertaken by the homeworker (Collins, 2005; Kugelmass, 1995; Gajendran et al. 2015).

Research by Gajendran et al. (2015) found as homeworking became more common in a workplace, the urge to reciprocate declined. However, whether this occurs when homeworking is expected of all employees is unclear. Social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) may explain the effect of normalising the homeworking arrangement on the urge to reciprocate, if employees feel special they also feel indebted for the privilege afforded them. If homeworking is expected of all employees as in this study, privileged status is removed and therefore the urge to reciprocate may also be removed. Homeworking as discretionary, or deals only available to some were described by Rousseau (2005) as I-deals, challenging the usual psychological contract between individuals and the organisation. Mirchandani (2000) recognised that as boundaries between home and work became less clear, the traditional relationship between employees and organisations would be affected. How the expectation of homeworking by all employees affects such boundaries, and the relationship with the organisation, will be explored in this research.

In summary, the literature review has identified several areas of focus for this study. The principal gap in the literature to be explored is how employees interpret a policy which makes homeworking not just available to but expected of all levels of traditionally office-based employees, and whether the change is liberating. Also of interest are the challenges faced by employees and managers operating in different workspaces and the adequacy of the training given. The study will also assess the degree of resistance to or support for the change and the impact of organisational norms, particularly with homeworking an expectation not a contractual requirement. Managerial decision making will be explored in terms of how decisions are made when balancing the expectation of homeworking with potentially unrealistic demands from employees. Finally, the study will consider whether the policy

triggers increased effort and motivation from employees resulting from feelings of indebtedness, and how career progression maybe affected by homeworking.

3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter begins with the philosophy of the research; my personal beliefs and assumptions which influenced the research design and guided my actions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). It describes the methodology adopted, why I chose the method I employed and the process of undertaking the research, highlighting challenges and where plans changed during the research.

Four factors relating to my beliefs and professional position in the organisation influenced my approach. Firstly, my ontological approach capturing my understanding and beliefs about the nature of the reality I studied. Second, the epistemology or nature of my relationship to the research and findings which leads onto an explanation of the methodology I believed to be appropriate. Finally, an explanation of my beliefs about the role my personal values and ethics played in the research process, described as axiology (Bailey, 2007).

3.2 Research Philosophy and Theoretical Assumptions

When commencing my research, it was important to establish my view of the reality I planned to study, defining what it meant 'to know' (Etherington, 2004). As the researcher, I had a view of how my beliefs linked to my research design. However, because of the complex relationship between philosophy and research, I found it helpful to consider the theoretical assumptions underpinning my research, addressing the ontological, epistemological, methodological and axiological aspects separately.

Beginning with the ontological question of whether social entities are objective and exist externally to social actors (Bryman, 2008), I believed I brought my own perspectives, biases, previous training, and pre-existing knowledge to the research (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). I could not therefore take the ontological position of objectivism where the social phenomena to be investigated existed beyond my ability to influence them. Further consideration of objectivism in relation to an organisation clarified my standpoint. If I believed my organisation to be an object with rules, regulations and standard procedures for getting work done, and a social organisation applying pressure to individuals to conform to its requirements, I could expect employees to apply rules and follow procedures. Thus, I would exhibit a position of objectivism, however, based on my experience, I believed my organisation did not operate that way. It was more aligned to the views of Salaman and Thompson (1973) who stated that rather than organisational order being pre-set and beyond influence, it is worked at with rules being less imposed and more like general understandings. These understandings are arrived at by negotiation between interested parties with individuals being involved in the social construct of reality (Silverman, 2013). My experience of the homeworking policy and how rules manifest themselves suggests continual negotiation rather than strict imposition, supporting my constructivist ontological standpoint.

Assessing the formal communications to establish the official position on homeworking required an assumption about the level of reality such documents would provide. Atkinson and Coffey (2004) assert that documents have their own ontological status, representing only documentary reality which cannot be extrapolated to the social reality of the organisation. My purpose in reviewing the communications was to establish the official view, however I recognised this took an ontological objectivist position of seeing the organisation as an entity with a view. The review therefore accepted the communications for what they were, material written for a specific purpose and not necessarily a reflection of reality. Their content does

however serve as a reference point against which to compare individuals' views gathered in the research.

The methodology used in research relates to the key philosophical concepts of the nature of knowledge and knowing (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Therefore, having considered my ontological position, the next section addresses my epistemological beliefs or my relationship with the research and findings, and whether I believed what I learnt to be independent of me as the researcher (Bailey, 2007).

My research explored the phenomena of employees' feelings about the expectation of homeworking, and was therefore undertaken from a phenomenological viewpoint. I believe reality is socially constructed rather than objectively determined. My task therefore as the researcher was not to gather facts and measure frequencies of occurrences, but to understand the social world by examining the constructions and interpretations individuals place on their experience of the world (Bryman, 2008).

As a senior HR manager in the organisation being studied, it was impossible to approach the research believing the phenomena I was seeking to understand were independent and unaffected by my behaviour as a researcher. There were several factors which meant I could not be completely objective and undertake research which was free of my personal values. I had a relationship with participants as co-workers in the organisation, I managed a team, some of whom home worked and some remained office-based. I therefore had views and prejudices about the subject being researched and could not be completely objective and deliver objective research findings (Snape & Spencer, 2003). Appendix 8 summarises the elements of the phenomenological paradigm and methodology for this research.

3.3 Methodology

This section addresses the link between the preceding theoretical framework and the chosen methodology. Bryman (1984) recognised within research theory the philosophical and technical aspects of research are often tackled simultaneously and possibly confusingly. More recently a body of literature on research methodology has developed which views methods as derived from the philosophical stance adopted. Thus, the epistemological approach influences the preference for a method, but not always, there is also the pragmatic approach which considers what is realistically achievable. The methodology describes my philosophical stance, data collection techniques, research design and sampling; in other words, the whole research strategy and approach as described in subsequent sections.

The methodological approach used sits within the interpretive paradigm and is appropriate to my ontological and epistemological beliefs, viewing the world as socially constructed, in contrast to the natural world. I aimed to investigate the subjectively meaningful experiences of my participants (Snape & Spencer, 2003). I wanted to understand how the organisation defined the expectation of homeworking, and how employees interpreted that expectation. To do this I used a qualitative approach involving focus groups and interviews to gather information. The attraction of qualitative research methods was that they are naturally more fluid than quantitative methods, allowing the discovery of unanticipated findings, and providing flexibility for research plans to alter to accommodate such findings (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Snizek (1976) analysed journal articles and found methodological techniques could not easily be extrapolated from the epistemological assumptions of the researcher. Rather, they tended to be concerned with completing a research project in a way most appropriate to the matter at hand. Taking a similarly pragmatic approach, I decided interviews were the most

appropriate method for data collection. Creating a questionnaire or undertaking quantitative analysis would have required assumptions about participants views, or identification of questions from existing literature. Along with my own beliefs, assumptions and understanding of the world, I had preconceptions about what others may think (Bailey, 2007), therefore interviews were chosen to allow participants to cover areas I considered unimportant.

Literature on homeworking as an expectation is sparse, therefore there are no theoretical assumptions or findings to be tested or proved or disproved. Where there is minimal existing literature, interviews provide a flexible method of providing insights into how participants view the world (Bryman, 2008; Robson, 2011). I sought to avoid making assumptions about individuals' perceptions instead giving them the opportunity to share their opinions within the boundaries of my research area. Semi-structured interviews provided flexibility to guide the direction of the discussion, together with the opportunity to pursue new and interesting issues raised by interviewees.

This understanding of the world features in the consideration of my axiological stance on this research. Whilst questions on the ontological and epistemological approach deal with the nature of truth, axiology focusses on values and ethics (Mingers, 2003). A question for me as researcher was what role my personal values should play in the research? Should I be the disinterested scientist, valuing knowledge gained for its own sake (Heron & Reason, 1997), or be emotionally engaged in the research, viewing knowledge gained as leading to transformation or positive change?

As a PhD researcher, it would be unusual to expect nothing to happen with my research. I did not view it as an end per se, but expected it to contribute to developing theory and moving the field forwards. I also hoped it would positively impact the organisation informing future

policies. I considered whether it was feasible for my research to remain value free by ignoring my opinions about the views of participants. I expected to be surprised by some views, and agree with some and not others. Being part of the organisation, I could not be completely disconnected, thus the influence of my values and characteristics, as for example a manager and homeworker, on my learning from the research would reflect in my findings. I therefore adopted an interpretive axiological approach, focussing on social relationships asking what employees do and feel, and how they understand the world.

3.4 Research Approach

Related to the research philosophy is the approach and research strategy to be adopted. The primary choice being what comes first, theory or data, deduction or induction, representing the distinction between positivist and phenomenological paradigms. Deduction involves development of a theory and hypothesis with a research strategy designed to test the hypothesis. However, as my research adopted a phenomenological philosophy, I used an inductive approach, collecting data and developing theory from the data analysis (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012). The benefit of this approach was its ability to provide new insights and explanations, along with flexibility to change focus if analysis indicated it should (Silverman, 2013).

Snape and Spencer (2003) suggest that ignoring deduction completely would be wrong. Although qualitative research is viewed as a primarily inductive paradigm, deduction may be involved at during the process. In my research, I could have conjectured that employees felt differently about homeworking following its introduction as an expectation. However, such a theory is too imprecise to be tested deductively. Silverman (2013) suggests that to enable understanding of individuals' experience of a situation, information is needed on their feelings

and perceptions. Regarding my organisation and homeworking, little information of this nature existed, therefore exploratory research using interviews was chosen as the most appropriate research method. Interviews provided the opportunity to fully explore feelings and perceptions by allowing probing, a facility not available via questionnaires.

In addition to conducting interviews, I examined organisational policies, guidance and communications to establish how employees were communicated with and the nature of information given, to provide the context within which employees were operating.

3.5 Research Strategy

As a researcher working full-time as a senior manager, opportunities for research beyond my organisation were limited by practicalities of travel time to other organisations and locations. Researching within my organisation was attractive due to the opportunities offered by the existing change programme and ease of access, Silverman (2013) notes that many case studies are chosen because of ease of access. In addition, the organisation was implementing an unusual change. Within the literature only one article by Harris (2003) over 10 years ago had considered imposed homeworking in the UK, this therefore afforded an opportunity to research a gap in the literature. This case study therefore is concerned with one organisation and the study of the complexity and nature of the case in question (Stake, 1995), an organisation which introduced an expectation of homeworking from all employees.

The research strategy or overall approach (Robson, 2011), was therefore an exploratory case study with focus groups as a developmental phase. Case studies allow the contextual conditions to be covered because they are relevant to the phenomenon being studied and are

useful where boundaries are ill-defined between the phenomenon and context (Yin, 2003). In this study, the phenomenon is expected homeworking in the context of the organisation and the way it was introduced. With a gap in the literature and a new phenomenon being explored, designing appropriate and comprehensive interview schedules would have been difficult. Focus groups prior to interviews can provide information on overarching themes and clarify the issues to be explored thus allowing interview schedules to be refined and validated (Silverman, 2013). Subsequent semi-structured interviews gathered data from three employee types, homeworkers, non-homeworkers and managers of homeworkers, ensuring different viewpoints were explored. Whether the managers themselves were homeworkers or not was not considered during selection.

3.6 Sampling

Having chosen a case study, I considered the sampling strategy required to select participants for focus groups and interviews. I decided on purposive sampling for both stages, it is a popular approach for qualitative researchers undertaking case studies allowing them to seek out groups and settings where the processes being studied are likely to occur (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). My aim was to understand the subjectively meaningful experiences of participants (Snape & Spencer, 2003), and choosing criteria for selection in purposive sampling relies on the researcher's judgement as to typicality or interest (Robson, 2011).

The participants were chosen for their characteristics enabling detailed exploration and understanding of the central theme being studied (Ritchie, Lewis & Elam, 2003). The criteria for selecting participants for focus groups and interviews was that they were homeworkers, non-homeworkers or managers of homeworkers. No data was available on proportion of

employees in each category across the organisation however in my team a third of staff had laptops for homeworking. Selection was based therefore on specific roles and the experiences of fulfilling those roles, rather than socio-demographic characteristics, referred to as judgement sampling (Burgess, 1984).

A bulletin notice (Appendix 9), published in February 2014 invited employees to participate in focus groups during March. Rooms and dates were pre-booked for three focus groups and as potential participants contacted me I checked their availability. Expressions of interest exceeded requirements in each category (homeworkers, non-homeworkers and managers of homeworkers) I was therefore able to select participants who represented a range of ages and grades and different genders using information from e-mails and conversations. By asking about caring responsibilities enabled me to include carers in focus groups and interviews. Six participants were selected for each focus group, and the aim was to interview up to ten homeworkers, ten non-homeworkers and six managers of homeworkers.

Several iterations were required before arriving at the final groupings as availability was an issue, initial focus groups changed due to participants dropping out. However, with the high level of interest, 134 responses to the bulletin notice, replacement participants were identified with the necessary characteristics to maintain the diversity of the groups. Following the focus groups, interviews were conducted during April to July 2014, the total number of participants in the study including focus groups and interviews was 42 and tables showing the characteristics of participants are at Appendix 10.

3.7 Recruitment Procedure

Recruits were employees of the Government Department being studied. Sampling or who to access is a methodological question, but how to access participants was both a practical and ethical consideration requiring sensitivity to the hierarchy and structure of the organisation (Lewis, 2003).

Being a senior HR manager in the organisation I was perceived as being associated with the homeworking policy although, as previously highlighted, this was not the case. The researchers' role in the organisation can be an ethical challenge as respondents may assume the researcher is an agent of the authorities (Iphofen, 2011), this aspect is addressed in the ethics section of this chapter. However, from a practical recruitment position, this was potentially a difficult problem to overcome. A supporting message from a senior leader, encouraging participation but distancing themselves and the organisation from the research, could be viewed as a cynical ploy to persuade employees to participate as management were keen to see the results.

A further challenge was that of managers as potential gatekeepers, permitting or denying access to employees. A manager could feel uncomfortable with their employee potentially talking about them. To overcome these concerns, it was essential all employees were well informed about the research during the recruitment phase. To mitigate the gatekeeper effect employees were recruited via an open invitation to everyone to participate either as a homeworker, manager of a homeworker or non-homeworker. Participation was confidential so managers were unaware their staff were being interviewed. As the intention was to recruit participants representing a gender split, spread of ages and including participants with caring

responsibilities (either male or female). The invitation made clear participation from employees in any group was welcomed. The invitation to staff in the weekly bulletin (Appendix 9) included the researcher's Lancaster University e-mail address for expressions of interest or queries. This approach was designed to ensure, as far as was possible, employees did not feel coerced into participating in the research.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

This section describes the ethical issues which were considered in designing the research and the measures put in place to address them. It also covers other issues which arose during fieldwork. Prior to commencing the research, approval was received from Lancaster University Ethics Committee, (Appendix 11).

3.8.1 Provision of Information and Obtaining Consent

To ensure individuals were fully informed as to what participation may involve, an information sheet was provided for both phases of the research. It included details about the purpose of the research, data collection, data storage and confidentiality, the information individuals required to decide whether to participate. Copies of the information sheets are at Appendices 12 and 13.

Having read the information sheet, individuals could ask further questions privately before signing the consent form, in line with Lancaster University ethical requirements. Consent was sought separately for each phase, as focus group participants were not interviewed during the research phase, the consent form is at Appendix 14. Miller and Bell (2002) suggest consent be

continually revisited during the research as both participant and researcher may not fully understand what they are agreeing to if the research direction changes. However, this was unnecessary as this research did not change sufficiently to render the initial consent redundant or misleading.

3.8.2 Anonymity and Confidentiality

Anonymity and confidentiality are distinct but related aspects of the ethical framework. For this study I followed the ethical code of the British Psychological Society (2009). Participants expect information they provide to remain confidential, and if published to not be identifiable as theirs (Robson, 2011). The focus groups were written up almost verbatim to capture the richness of the discussion, but comments were not attributed to individuals. For the interview transcripts, pseudonyms were allocated to participants to preserve their anonymity. As Grinyer (2009) suggests, I checked whether any participants wish to forgo anonymity and retain ownership of their stories, but none did.

Being a small study, a further consideration was whether anonymisation would be sufficient to protect participants identities if stories were so specific as to be identifiable (Wiles, Crow, Heath & Charles, 2008). I concluded it was unlikely such distinctive features would emerge as to be identifiable as a specific individual, and indeed that has not been the case.

Legislation provides a high-level of security for personal data and I handled my data in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 storing information securely in a cabinet to which I retained the only key. Electronic records were stored on the University's secure server. Raw data collected from and identifiable to individuals was retained for the life of the research

project then destroyed. Consent forms have been retained should proof of consent be required at a later stage if a participant complains, or to provide proof of consent to journal editors.

The fact of an employee's participation in the interview phase of the research was not shared with the employees' managers, colleagues, or subordinates. Focus groups and interviews were held away from participants' offices so colleagues were unaware of their participation to preserve anonymity. The meeting purpose was not recorded in electronic calendars to ensure no one could see it during the sharing of personal calendars.

As a senior manager undertaking the research, a further consideration was the need to preserve confidentiality in the face of authoritative pressure. The Social Research Association (2003) ethical guidelines state it is the social researcher's responsibility to ensure subjects identities are protected even when under pressure from authoritative sources to divulge identities. I was conscious that senior managers may ask "who has said what?" However, the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998 appear well embedded in the organisation as no one asked.

3.8.3 Prevention of Harm

The balance of power between researcher and participant is vital particularly in qualitative research (Murphy & Dingwall, 2007). As I was both the researcher and a senior manager in the organisation, all participants were subordinates. It was vital therefore to be clear about the research relationship and emphasise in the participant information that data collected was for research purposes. It would remain confidential, would not be used within the organisation

for any purpose specific to that individual, and only I as the researcher and supervisors would have access to the data. Participants may have been concerned that criticism could lead to disciplinary action, or admissions about not working or undertaking caring duties during homeworking may be passed to their manager for performance management action. The information sheet was designed to reassure participants confidentiality was paramount and they could talk without fear of adverse impact on their working life. They could also withdraw from the study up to the point the data was anonymised without any penalty or impact on their employment then or at any time in the future.

3.8.4 The Researcher as a Positional Subject

My position as a senior HR manager in the organisation could affect respondents in two ways. They would be being interviewed by a senior manager and one in a position which, as an HR role, meant access to data and influence that non-HR roles would not have. I was therefore conscious participants may react differently because of my role and grade. To reassure them I used the participant information sheets and consent forms. However, I possibly emphasised confidentiality and anonymity more than an external researcher. For example, I not only booked rooms away from offices but closed blinds to ensure passing employees could not see the interview or the voice recorder.

The openness of participants in the interviews surprised me as I had anticipated some degree of reserve and circumspection due to my status. It is impossible to assess how much my position impacted on participants; I have no way of knowing whether an external researcher would have elicited different and more detailed responses. I can however note the honesty with which participants spoke about themselves and the willingness with which they described

the behaviour of others. Naming names and being quite critical of some colleagues demonstrated openness beyond what I had anticipated.

3.8.5 Ethical Considerations during Fieldwork

The measures I put in place to address the ethical concerns worked well. However, an unforeseen situation arose during an interview with a non-homeworker. When asked why they did not work from home, the participant said she was the only team member not allowed to and the reason could be discrimination either on the grounds of gender or race. Such a serious allegation during an interview could not be ignored, in my role as senior HR manager I was required to act immediately on allegations of discrimination following organisational procedures.

Given the assurances around confidentiality I concluded that confidentiality of the individual must be preserved alongside a satisfactory way of dealing with the alleged discrimination. I explained to the participant I would suspend the interview temporarily and assume my HR role. I explained any discussion while the recorder was switched off would not form part of the research, but allow us to deal with the allegation of discrimination. The participant confirmed this was acceptable, and once the discussion was concluded I checked whether the participant wished to resume the interview or reschedule it to separate the different roles and content. She agreed to continue and I explained once the recorder was on I would assume the role of researcher. I noted the discussion and the action I took separately, and after the interview the participant confirmed her relief that the issue had not been ignored but handled professionally. She understood the separation between the research process and the HR process, and between my roles as HR manager and academic researcher.

3.9 Conduct of Focus Groups

To inform development of the schedule of questions for semi-structured interviews three focus groups were held each with six participants. One each for homeworkers, non-homeworkers and managers of homeworkers, to informally discuss employees' feelings about the homeworking policy and identify issues. The focus groups constituted a developmental phase of the research to identify overarching themes and validate and improve the initial list of interview questions. By having several participants in the focus groups, a variety of points of view emerged for the group to respond to and discuss thus generating themes to be explored in the interviews (Saunders et al., 2012). My role was to facilitate the discussion which although following a framework of key themes, was intended to be largely free flowing (Zikmund, 1997).

Using the indicative script at Appendix 15, I explained the purpose of the group and initiated the discussion (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Lowe, 2002). The session was recorded as it would have been impossible to take notes and follow the discussion properly. Although it constituted a developmental phase of the research, the discussion was written up and proved a rich source of data, as well as highlighting themes for exploration in interviews. The transcripts of the focus groups are at Appendix 16.

During the sessions participants raised issues outside the initial interview schedule, for example grade as a factor in homeworking. Equally some proposed interview questions were identified as too specific, requiring amendment to make them broader and less leading. As noted previously, the sessions took place in office hours in the normal place of work with

attendees given information on the research, issues such as note taking and confidentiality and consent was sought prior to participation.

3.10 Conduct of Interviews

I decided against unstructured interviews as although valuable for very exploratory studies, they allow the agenda to be set by the interviewee (Arthur & Nazroo, 2003). Homeworking can be an emotive issue which people may be keen to discuss. However, without some structure, issues relevant to the research may be overlooked. In contrast, structured interviews consisting of sequenced questions with multiple routes to get to the objectives (Riley, Wood, Clark, Wilkie & Szivas, 2000) were dismissed as providing limited opportunity to examine individual observations around homeworking. Also, a lack of in-depth questioning can result in a disproportionate amount of data being generated from more articulate participants (Arthur & Nazroo, 2003).

Data from the focus groups gave an indication of the issues to be explored and semi-structured interviews allowed flexibility. Key questions were asked in the same way for all interviewees, but with the ability to probe for further information (Patton, 2002). I allowed an hour for each interview and in designing the interview schedules, I was aware too many questions risked latter ones being missed due to lack of time. Equally, too few questions may result in the session developing into an unstructured interview, final interview schedules are at Appendix 17. The questions were derived from issues identified in the literature, knowledge of issues raised both formally and informally in the organisation, and focus groups discussions. They were designed to encourage participants to describe their experiences of the homeworking

policy from the perspective of their own working context (Burgess, 1984). The schedules worked well, with most interviews lasting 30-40 minutes and all questions addressed.

3.11 Transferability and Credibility

3.11.1 Transferability

For any qualitative researcher it is impossible to replicate, or freeze as LeCompte and Goetz (1982) term it, the setting and circumstances of a social study. Complete replication of the circumstances is unrealistic (Seale, 1999). What can be considered however is the transferability of the research, or the extent to which results can apply or transfer to other studies (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Achieving some degree of dependability relies on completeness of description, and records of the research process which produced a set of findings, such that future researchers can read the account and 'replicate' the study (Seale, 1999).

As the researcher I can describe the research in such a way as to enable anyone interested in transferability to decide whether it is possible. Rather than making statements regarding the generalizability of the research, I will give the reader the opportunity to make connections between elements of my research and their own situations. The boundaries of this study are therefore described, along with the characteristics of both the organization and the participants, number of participants, method of data collection and the analysis. Having gained an understanding of the study, other researchers may compare examples of phenomenon from this research with their own studies. Establishing whether my findings would hold true for similar studies using the same research techniques in other settings, and different conditions may be worthwhile. If the results obtained are dissimilar, this may indicate different

realities and exploring reasons for the disparities could be as interesting, if not more so, than the results themselves.

3.11.2 Credibility

Internal validity describes the establishment of a good fit between a researcher's observations and the theory they develop, although both Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Lincoln and Guba (1985) prefer the term credibility when referring to the concept as applied to qualitative evidence. Credibility is present when results obtained echo the views of participants being studied thus demonstrating confidence in the data.

Triangulation is a method of improving credibility or checking the congruence of theory with observations (Cho & Trent, 2006). I have undertaken peer debriefing by discussing my findings, theory and conclusions with supervisors on a continuous basis to allow challenge and validation of my interpretation. During discussions I have considered different interpretations and suggestions from supervisors to develop both the design of the study and analysis. The aim being to ensure my research findings represent a credible interpretation of the data (Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson & Spiers, 2002).

3.12 Coding the Data

To analyse the data, I coded it manually to see it in its entirety and form a mental picture, spotting patterns or links, something I found I could not do using software. I followed Bryman's (2008) four stage approach to coding qualitative data. Whilst transcribing, I read the text making notes on themes and unusual observations, noting what was happening in the

data. Once all interviews had been transcribed, the second stage involved reading the transcripts in more detail, highlighting and making notes on what passages were focussing on.

Once familiar with each transcript, I moved to stage three, working through each one systematically, identifying features of the data. I coded sections of text using marginal notes to identify examples of the same phenomena, an example of a coded interview is at Appendix 18. I initially intended to use apriori codes taken from the interview schedule, but as I started the third stage of coding I felt it important to allow codes to be generated from the data to build up into themes. After coding the first interview I listed the codes generated from that interview. For subsequent interviews I referred to my list of codes to achieve consistency in coding. However, I did not force data into a pre-existing code if it warranted a new one and I did not set a limit on the number of codes created.

After coding the transcripts, I had generated a long and somewhat overwhelming list of codes, the next stage was to organise them into groups. To do this, and aid my thinking on how codes could be grouped together to form themes, I wrote each code on a post-it note creating visual and flexible method of forming groupings. I stuck the notes onto flip-chart paper and grouped together codes which were similar in nature to form themes, I could see how themes related to each other, and how sub-themes began to emerge. The advantage of using post-it notes was codes could be repositioned as new sub-themes emerged. Once I was content that my themes and sub-themes represented, and were grounded in my raw data, I produced a hierarchy map of the themes (Appendix 19). Having constructed the hierarchy, I created separate documents for each theme and sub-theme, as shown in the example at Appendix 20, and using Word cut and pasted the coded material into the relevant theme. Using Bryman's

(2008) method I felt I had thoroughly examined my data, allowing themes to emerge whilst maintaining a connection with the data which I would not have achieved using software.

3.13 Overview of Process Compared to Plans

This section gives a brief assessment of how the research process including analysis compared with the research plan, the practicalities, timing, unforeseen obstacles and whether they could have been anticipated.

Although my planning was detailed, I was aware that the research was unlikely to be a linear process. I had a view of exploratory focus groups paving the way for interviews, however I did not anticipate the richness of data gathered from the focus groups. I planned to use the output to inform the questions for the interviews, writing up a short summary of themes which emerged. However, as I analysed the focus group material to identify themes, it became apparent the material was rich enough to warrant transcribing for use alongside material from the interviews. Focus group members talked in detail about their experiences, being open about personal issues and their feelings both positive and negative regarding the homeworking policy. I therefore required additional time to produce full transcripts of the focus group recordings.

Timings in the plan were also amended to accommodate timetabling challenges around interviews, particularly matching availability of rooms to participant availability during the period of data collection from April to July 2014.

4. Findings

4.1 Introduction

The research aim was to undertake an exploration of the impact on managers and staff of a policy which expects homeworking to reduce the demand for office space. The findings are based on interviews conducted with nine homeworkers, nine non-homeworkers and six managers.

This chapter addresses the themes in the context of the research objectives beginning with how employees knew about the homeworking policy, their sources of information, and their levels of understanding of the policy and reasons for its introduction. Having addressed knowledge and understanding, the chapter considers how employees interpreted and implemented the policy, including factors which influenced them to homework, or not. Conceptualisation of the policy is then examined, encompassing the perceptions of employees and managers of the policy, regardless of whether they undertook homeworking themselves. Specific attention is given to implementation of the homeworking policy from the managers' perspective, and the concept of trust as applicable to the policy. Finally, the impact of homeworking on career progression is examined.

The detailed research objectives were:

- To explore how the organisational homeworking policy is conceptualised and implemented by managers and employees.
- To explore the factors which influence the decision to work at home or stay in the office.

- To explore how trust is conceptualised and implemented between managers and employees when homeworking is an expectation.
- To explore the perceptions of how homeworking, when it is an expectation, impacts on career progression.

The organisation provided a variety of information on the homeworking policy for all employees, regardless of grade or role. Information was disseminated weekly, via different methods to ensure employees were aware of, and could access, the homeworking policy. Methods included written articles in the staff bulletin, intranet pages, the corporate television screens and discussion papers for team meetings. Verbal briefings by senior staff were cascaded down the organisation via local stand-up sessions. The following section considers participants' understanding of the policy, information sources and their knowledge of policy aims.

4.2 Sources of Information

All groups referred to accessing both written and verbal information about the policy. However, despite the large quantity of written material disseminated in various formats, most information was obtained from colleagues. Very little information came from written sources and across all groups the formal Line Manager Policy Guidance was the least popular, only mentioned by four participants.

The fact that few people accessed the policy guide for information may be explained by a homeworker who referred to problems locating it:

“At the time of the Olympics there was a huge amount of guidance and reference material on how to manage staff remotely. I think that has either got buried or lost somewhere so I’m not actually clear about what there is now, whether that it’s hidden somewhere, it’s nowhere up front like it was at the time of the Olympics so I wouldn’t know where to look now” (HW1).

The move from a situation where homeworking was a perk to becoming an expectation represented a significant change in approach, yet awareness of the Policy Guide was very low and no one referred to the actual Homeworking Policy. One manager personally developed a policy for her team, including rules of operation and tips to ensure team-members knew how homeworking operated in her section, because she felt the organisational guidance lacked specifics.

Despite written information being disseminated via the methods described, all groups cited verbal communications as their prime information source, the main sources being weekly team discussions on the corporate messages included in briefing reports, and informal chats with colleagues. All groups, including managers, identified colleagues as key information sources. However, the information gleaned was informal and unofficial:

“you also hear more information from conversations with colleagues and the like which sort of fleshed out some of the details which weren’t necessarily in the official messages” (HW3).

A senior manager said, *“I suppose it’s from conversations that you have with people, colleagues and you know talking around”* (NHW5). Alongside talking about and sharing information, knowledge was also gained by observing colleagues, one manager noted:

“it has largely been by observing behaviour, so if you arrive within a unit or team or whatever, and observe that people are working from home the expectation is that that’s agreed and acceptable, so you follow suit” (MGR3).

Almost half of all participants referred to the lack of information or difficulty locating it. A manager thought the organisation had introduced the change by stealth as he had *“not seen anything issued via the bulletin or from the senior manager or even from HR”* (MGR3). A homeworker described her experience of searching for information *“I looked for it when someone asked me if they could work from home because they were pregnant, and I tried to look that up and I couldn’t find anything”* (HW5). This was despite the communication plan including numerous written communications explaining the expectation of homeworking, and the variety of dissemination methods. Overall, all groups described communications as unclear, summed up as:

“there’s been formal verbal briefings and then the chit chat and gossip around actually implementing it. I’ve not received anything or really seen much that’s come out written, and that’s where I think there’s a bit of a disconnect” (MGR6).

4.3 Conceptualisation of the Homeworking Policy

After being asked about their knowledge of the homeworking policy, and its impact on them personally in terms of working patterns and decisions, the next section considers participants’

understanding of the policy, how they interpreted the information and whether their interpretation aligned with the organisation's aims.

4.3.1 Understanding of the Reasons for the Policy

Despite weekly communications, understanding of the reasons for the policy's introduction varied widely across all groups. Some understood the aim as changing how the organisation worked in terms of greater flexibility from homeworking, supported by technology and culture change. In contrast, others assumed it was about addressing lack of space or provision of additional laptops and Blackberries.

Two homeworkers and two non-homeworkers had a good level of understanding of the change involving homeworking. One commented the expectation of homeworking was *"pretty much enshrined in the philosophy or the organisation these days, you can't be not aware of it"* (NHW2). Another observed *"there was a lot of stuff coming at us to prepare us for what was going to happen and I think really that was the stage at which I was absorbing some of that information"* (NHW6). However, one suggested that although she understood the reasons for its introduction, colleagues did not, which may be due to poor communications. Two non-homeworkers suggested communications should have addressed how the policy would work in practice, including case studies to help less well-informed colleagues:

"perhaps some more comms about case studies of people who do it successfully, to encourage others to give it a go 'cos until you try it you don't really know what it's going to be like for you. If you've got some expectation other people are doing it and they give good reviews you might be more encouraged to try it" (NHW1).

Most participants were aware of the policy, but understanding of the rationale for its introduction differed. A third of participants assumed it was either about the provision of new technology or a solution to the shortage of space. One homemaker said, *“it’s definitely advocated because we don’t have enough desk spaces for each of us anymore and if we were at full capacity we couldn’t manage”* (HW6). Such comments were not restricted to junior grades, a manager believed the expectation of homeworking was *“because there isn’t enough accommodation to accommodate all the people”* (MGR5). Three participants who thought it was just about new technology, had a good knowledge of the equipment being provided, including where to obtain a new laptop. One commented on the organisation’s proactive approach, *“I’ve had people from the administration team approach me and say if you do want to do it we do have laptops available, we can set you up so I know where to go”* (NHW1).

Other participants only knew of the homeworking policy because colleagues who were previously office-based began homeworking. Prior to noticing this change in working patterns, they were unaware the policy existed or why it was introduced, one non-homeworker knew about it because *“in terms of the team that I’m in there are quite a few people who now work from home, and I would say that it does seem quite flexible”* (NHW9).

When questioned about the policy’s aims, only six participants across all groups knew of the published aims of changing the culture around where people worked in the longer term. One described the aim as to *“ensure people have a work-life balance which enables them to work in ways which are less traditional than what we used to do in the past”* (HW3).

A quarter of all participants knew little of the policy aims despite the variety and intensity of communications. Of these, three had not seen any information, one explained:

“Not particularly, not a consistent one voice message. Nothing top down. It was what you heard about in the kitchen or in the corridor or in the lifts. It wasn’t an upfront message at all” (HW1).

The remainder, non-homeworkers and a manager, had little understanding because they had no interest in homeworking and ignored corporate communications. One said, *“I don’t know whether it’s because I don’t have the desire to do it that I wasn’t really paying much attention to it but I don’t know much about it” (NHW1)*. Another who *“did not want to necessarily work from home”* said she knew little about the expectation but thought there was an option of *“you can work from home if you like to, if you want to get your requests in now” (NHW8)*.

Thus, it appears that despite efforts to communicate detailed information on the policy’s aims and the reasons for it, levels of understanding varied from in-depth knowledge, including suggested improvements to communications, through to little understanding or interest in the policy.

4.3.2 Interpretation of Corporate Messages

Alongside differing levels of understanding of the homeworking policy’s aims, some participants found homeworking communications confusing or contradictory. Three themes emerged around the way in which corporate messages were perceived to be contradictory or open to different interpretations.

Firstly, participants across all groups were unclear whether staff were expected to work from home or it was just being encouraged. Two thirds of all participants understood it was an expectation. The remainder thought the organisation was only promoting homeworking. One non-homeworker said, *“it’s encourage, encourage, encourage”* (NHW5). Three non-homeworkers mentioned the lack of pressure to work from home, *“it doesn’t feel like we are being forced to, or not allowed to. It feels like I have the option to do it”* (NHW8).

A second source of confusion was caused by messages from middle managers contradicting those from senior managers. Participants from all groups felt senior management communications explained homeworking as an expectation whereas middle managers said people ‘may’ work from home. One homeworker reported that despite senior staff stating homeworking was expected, a colleague with a disabled child was prevented from doing so by a middle manager with no reason given so, *“you get all sorts of weird contradicting messages come out from people, so one minute you’re thinking is the organisation wanting to do this or isn’t it”* (HW2). When asked who was giving contradictory messages the homeworker said: *“managers, not necessarily at the senior levels either. It can be more the middle managers”* (HW2).

Finally, participants from all groups felt it contradictory that the organisation expected homeworking without providing technology to support it, for example, *“they want lots of people to work from home because that’s a good thing and then we were like yeah, and then they were like well you can’t have a laptop”* (NHW8). The contradictory nature of messages was discussed in the focus group who felt the organisation wanted people to work from home

but *“actually we haven’t really got enough IT for it and we want to make sure that there’s enough people in so you can’t all be out all the time”* (NHW2), thus diluting the message.

Therefore, despite a communications plan (Appendix 3) regularly and frequently informing employees of the homeworking policy and its aims by a variety of methods, levels of awareness varied considerably and messages were interpreted differently, resulting in lack of clarity around the policy’s aims.

4.3.3 Consistency

With respect to communication of the policy, as previously noted, there was evidence of conflicting messages with some middle managers unsupportive of the policy. Lack of consistency in implementation across the organisation was mentioned by almost half of all participants. Nine participants (two non-homeworkers, three homeworkers and four managers) thought the policy was not implemented consistently because of the differing attitudes amongst managers. Some agreed readily to homeworking whilst others refused because they disagreed with the policy. Inconsistent application of the policy was blamed on the lack of a standardised process for decision-making. Lack of guidance allowed managers to make decisions influenced by personal beliefs and prejudices rather than fairly applying the policy. One observed *“some managers just absolutely won’t agree to it which I find quite shocking and I think that needs to be stamped out”* (MGR4).

Three homeworkers suggested the inconsistent approach by managers be addressed with the introduction of a standard process rather than leaving it up to individuals. One non-homeworker said managers should not refuse simply because they could, and decisions to

refuse homeworking should be quality assured and reasons given. It appeared managerial discretion was overriding the policy expectation. A manager suggested criteria and ground rules for decision making:

“It needs to be clearer around the policy of how you make the decision, what the expectations of the organisation are and some basic rules or guidelines around, if you’re needed in the office then you have to come into the office regardless of what else has been agreed” (MGR6).

Variations in the availability of technology to support the policy was also cited as a possible cause of inconsistency. Blackberries were not available for all staff; in some teams everyone had one, in others only senior staff. Similarly, whilst some teams allocated personal laptops, others had pool laptops to be borrowed and returned each time. One manager summarised:

“I think it’s patchy I think probably at a senior level in the organisation there’s a sense that it’s a good thing to do but I don’t think they’re entirely confident that we’re properly set up to have it work in the way it should” (MGR4).

4.3.4 Perceptions of the Change in Homeworking Policy

Participants were asked for their overall views on the homeworking policy, not just how they personally implemented it. Some recognised the benefits both for employees and the organisation, others saw no benefit personally, but something others should do, *“it sounds rather selfish but if everyone else can do it I don’t have to” (NHW6).*

All non-homeworkers explained their reasons for not homeworking but recognised the need for a proportion of colleagues to do it to ensure enough desks were available each day:

“if enough colleagues undertake homeworking I won’t need to, because there are lots of other people doing it in roles where you know you can do that successfully so I don’t feel that there’s any urgency for me to consider it” (NHW1).

Furthermore, all non-homeworkers explained they would only undertake homeworking if forced to, *“if it got to a critical point where everyone in the building had to consider homeworking then I might do one day per week” (NHW2)*, or if it suited them personally:

“For me the working from home was more about if it was convenient, if there was a reason that I wanted to be in my house and not at work I would do it as a kind of fall back not as a kind of structured I will do one or two days” (NHW8).

One non-homeworker was suspicious of the organisation, believing the office environment was being made unpleasant to increase homeworking:

“They are making it slightly more unpleasant may not be quite the right word but uncongenial perhaps is a better word, to work in here because you don’t have the convenience of a pedestal or a nearby cupboard, you have a little box and lockers so it’s tedious to get set up for work” (NHW5).

In contrast to the negative comments, others were more positive. A third of non-homeworkers supported homeworking believing it benefited colleagues and the organisation with improved

goodwill and productivity from homeworkers; *“I think you get more out of people if you actually give them some flexibility”* (NHW9).

In contrast, only two homeworkers thought the new policy was good. Others were accustomed to homeworking and therefore did not see it as a positive change. Managers however did recognise the increased productivity and goodwill. One said her team were happy being called in the evening because they were grateful for flexibility when they needed it:

“you get much more bang for your buck out of us than the presenteeism that exists in other teams, the clock watchers” (MGR4).

Three homeworkers felt homeworking had moved from being a perk to a right:

“It always used to be a bit of a perk and possibly only senior people got the perk of being able to work from home but now I felt I was able to ask for it and I’m not sure anybody would be able to say no to it” (HW7).

With increased homeworking there was recognition that a balance was needed between home and office working. Homeworkers valued time in the office to meet people and network, and managers needed a balance to allow teams to assemble face-to-face. Increased homeworking meant Wednesday was the only day they could expect most people in the office resulting in some having no desk.

4.4 Implementation of the Policy

Having considered communication of the policy and participants' understanding and conceptualisation of its aims, the next section addresses a research objective exploring how the policy was implemented by employees. It examines the nature of work undertaken at home and conversely work considered unsuitable for homeworking, along with patterns of homeworking by participants in terms of frequency, regularity, and amount of homeworking.

4.4.1 Types of Work Undertaken at Home and in the Office

Although the policy did not specify work which could, or should be, undertaken from home, participants in all groups identified different types of work and suitability for homeworking. Tasks needing peace and quiet were highlighted as particularly suited to homeworking, examples being reading documents, writing minutes and reports, examining procurement bids or projects with *"a beginning, a middle and an end"* (HW9). Three non-homeworkers distinguished between working 'from home' and working 'at home'. One described the examples outlined above as working 'from' home, where people *"don't have their calls routed through and don't log on and just do a piece of work at home, notes from a meeting to type up and don't want to be distracted"* (NHW8). This distinction was echoed by another non-homeworker who observed some people work from home to read or write a report expecting not to be disturbed thinking: *"I'm not going to answer any phone calls. It's as though I'm not in work"* (NHW3).

In contrast, working 'at home' was defined as carrying out the full range of work tasks with the office phone diverted home so it was not apparent whether someone was in the office or at home. Non-homeworkers used the labels 'working at home' and 'working from home' to distinguish homeworking colleagues as those who shut themselves away expecting not to be

disturbed, and those who endeavoured to make homeworking invisible to anyone except colleagues who knew they were not in the office. Non-homeworking participants highlighted the difficulties caused by colleagues working from home and being uncontactable, a point which is discussed later.

Participants in all groups identified two types of work unsuited to homeworking. Firstly, physical activities which the organisation recognised were unsuited to homeworking, however no role required such activity every day. A quarter of all participants identified tasks which required them to be in the office. For example, distributing laptops and projectors, filing invoices, printing documents, issuing travel tickets, photocopying and packaging resources for off-site events.

Second was work requiring proximity to either senior staff or colleagues, for example planning complex meetings where issues were best addressed face-to-face. However, participants across all groups thought no role consisted solely of such work, and indeed the culture change included more flexibility to share duties across teams. Two participants in Personal Assistant (PA) posts felt they needed to be in the office with their senior manager but could not explain why, beyond saying it was an expectation. Neither had considered doing the job remotely. Participants in support roles such as finance and administration felt strongly about being near their team in case colleagues needed anything:

“I like to make sure I’m here for people, anyone, if they need anything they can come to you. If I’m not physically here, well there’s not a lot I can really do when I’m at home. I can do more here but not at home” (NHW4).

It was acknowledged that although some administrative work could be undertaken remotely, face-to-face was easier:

“notionally things can be done remotely, but don’t work as effectively in terms of making arrangements and being able to go around and talk to people to get things organised quickly” (MGR3).

Having considered the work undertaken by employees at home and views on tasks unsuited to homeworking, the next section considers the working patterns of homeworkers.

4.4.2 Working Patterns

Various homeworking patterns were identified, ranging from one day a week to one example of permanent homeworking. A third of participants home-worked one day per week, with two days being the next most popular. Other responses were occasional; weekends, every other week and ad hoc. With such variety a manager observed *“actually trying to get everyone together is quite difficult and that’s with quite a small team” (MGR1).*

In summary, views differed on tasks suitable for homeworking, with some carrying out their full role at home whilst others used the opportunity to concentrate without interruptions. The impact of such decisions on office-based colleagues is examined in the next section.

4.4.3 Impact on Staff Remaining in the Office

Participants were asked about the impact of homeworking on colleagues in the office, either non-homeworkers, or homeworkers on their office-based days. For non-homeworkers the introduction of hot-desking alongside the homeworking policy was unpopular. They found the ever-changing environment unsettling with new neighbours each day and the challenge of finding a vacant desk. They felt devalued, providing cover for homeworking colleagues but without a guaranteed desk. A ratio of eight desks to ten people caused problems finding a desk, particularly for late arrivals, and made locating colleagues difficult. Despite no one having an allocated place, one participant still referred to a desk as his, *“the disadvantages are that you don’t really sit with your team anymore and if you don’t come early your seat is gone”* (NHW7).

For most non-homeworkers the main impact was increased workload and disruption as they became the focal point for queries, becoming the ‘go to person’ for staff seeking homeworking colleagues, regardless of whether homeworkers were contactable or not:

“they come to me because they can see me, because I am there so they come to me, When I am in the office I am the go to person. They won’t contact people working from home” (NHW7).

Non-homeworkers were frustrated by the assumption that they would know the whereabouts of a homeworker, particularly as hot-desking meant they may not know the person, as the comments illustrate:

“I see people wandering round or coming to me or a whole group of us and saying where is this person and you go ‘don’t know, did you look in their calendar?’ And they

say things like 'I sent them an appointment for next Monday and I don't know if they're going to come or not' and you're thinking why are you asking us?" (NHW8).

"Rather than e-mail others who are not physically there one person gets all the queries I think they can tend to feel a bit tetchy about that" (HW5).

Alongside dealing with queries and questions on behalf of homeworkers, homeworkers themselves made additional demands by ringing office-based colleagues to ask them to locate colleagues in the office or find information not accessible from home. Furthermore, being helpful led to further demands for help:

"I've found sometimes that if I've sorted out a problem for somebody in an area that's relevant to me they will come up to me with all sorts of wild and wonderful things that they want me to sort out for them" (NHW6).

Despite the expectation of homeworking and the drawbacks of remaining in the office in terms of the unsettling environment and increased workload, some non-homeworkers did not want to work from home but appreciated those who did. By working from home, they relieved the pressure on non-homeworkers to start homeworking. Because colleagues worked from home, one participant felt she need not:

"I don't resent the fact that they work from home. It works in my favour because if they're at home then I can be here, it just makes sense otherwise there would be overcrowding in the office" (NHW1).

In summary, the main impact of homeworking on office-based staff was becoming the 'go to' people for queries, including from homeworkers. The next section explores the methods and adequacy of communication between office-based staff and homeworking colleagues.

4.5 Communications with Homeworkers

Participants in all groups talked about communicating with homeworkers, with telephone and e-mail most popular for formal communications. For informal messages and exchanging office gossip, Lync (Microsoft instant messaging tool), was the preferred method. Participants in all groups used conference calls with positive and negative views balanced. When asked about the ease of contacting homeworkers, half of all participants across all groups experienced problems, mainly due to calls not diverted to home numbers, causing frustration and delaying work. In contrast, homeworkers felt expected to be instantly available for colleagues causing them to dash to answer calls. Making clear homeworkers have periods of non-availability in common with office-based colleagues was highlighted as important.

4.5.1 Methods of Communication

Telephone and e-mail were the most used communication methods, with four participants, homeworkers and non-homeworkers, mentioning sequencing. E-mailing first followed by a call, the e-mail giving notice that a discussion was required. In terms of the type of communication, personal, informal or formal, there was no preferred method. However, the telephone was favoured for complex messages as being "*more direct, you have greater interaction, it's not perfect but you have greater interaction and it allows you to say things much more quickly*" (NHW5). Telephone was also preferred for exchanging views, "*if it's*

something that's work stuff that we need to chat through then I'll go into a room and ring whoever it is" (NHW8).

A third of participants mentioned conference calls. Not being able to observe people was a drawback:

"you miss the body language and people can end up sounding a bit random I think because you're not really reading the meeting when you're the person on the end of the phone" (MGR1).

For large meetings, poor tele-conferencing technology was a problem, unless colleagues spoke directly into the microphone the conversation was inaudible. However, one manager's team were very skilled at participating in dial-in meetings and could dominate the meeting despite being on the telephone:

"we are so good at it now that actually when we are on the end of the phone me and my team can dominate a meeting where everybody else is physically sitting in a room because they can't cope with the interaction and understanding we have when my team get involved" (MGR4).

A fifth of all participants mentioned Lync as useful for personal messages because no information was retained so you could *"share views on work issues without risking a record being kept"* (HW4), an advantage when working on sensitive issues. It also helped make homeworking colleagues feel part of the team:

“I talk to team members in that way.....you know, ‘it’s all kicked off here because so and so happened’, or ‘you might want to know whatever’, it makes them feel part of the team” (NHW2).

4.5.2 Availability of Employees

When asked about ease of contacting homeworkers, of all interviewees only four were reluctant to contact homeworkers, one commented, *“if someone says they’re working from home I think twice before I give them a call or I might be more likely to drop them an e-mail”* (HW6). One manager described a senior colleague who made his reluctance obvious, *“he frequently makes a big issue about not being able to speak to people because they’re working from home”* (MGR4).

Half of all participants experienced problems contacting homeworkers mainly due to calls not diverted to home or slow or no response to e-mails and calls, slow being described as over thirty minutes. In contrast, a quarter of homeworkers felt expected to always be immediately available despite that not being applicable in the office. One manager received feedback on the lack of availability of homeworkers in his team:

“I’ve given encouragement to say make sure you respond to e-mails quickly, make sure you get back to people on the phone, make sure you are seen to be busy because we have to work with a range of people and I’ve had some feedback” (MGR3).

A non-homeworker described the different expectations of office-workers and homeworkers in terms of availability:

“when people are working in the office they may not be at their desk and they’re at a meeting or whatever else it is they’re doing. So, the fact you can’t immediately pick up the telephone to someone, a colleague working from home is really neither here nor there because you might go to the desk and the desk is bare” (NHW5).

The importance of maintaining accurate calendars was mentioned by almost all participants, particularly the inclusion of one’s location and, as homeworkers may be out doing the school run or providing care for elderly relatives, periods of non-availability.

Having examined participants’ knowledge of the homeworking policy and its implementation, the next section identifies factors influencing the decision to work from home or not despite the policy expectation.

4.6 Why Employees Work from Home

Four factors influenced the decision on homeworking, a desire to be in the home environment, to escape the office environment or vice versa. For example, home was a more attractive place to work for carers, but less appealing if cramped and noisy. Similarly, the office was unappealing if noisy and distracting but attractive to those seeking social interaction.

4.6.1 Caring Responsibilities

The policy was silent on combining homeworking with caring responsibilities, however homeworkers assumed it was acceptable. Many participants across all groups thought

homeworking was good for employees with children. Homeworkers mentioned the advantage of collecting children from school and spending time with them:

“I work from home because I was missing interaction with the kids, I wasn’t seeing them often so I would see them at bedtime literally. I would come home and say have you done your homework, get the homework done and then its bedtime so I wasn’t seeing them for five days.....so, it’s nice not to travel into work and have extra time with my kids so I can spend some quality time with them” (HW4).

Two mentioned financial benefits for parents, one explained it was *“a case of trying to manage the costs of childcare and to make that a bit more affordable as well as trying to have a bit more time with my young one” (HW3).*

Three homeworkers cared for elderly relatives and being able to accommodate their needs without using leave was important; *“I’ve got caring arrangements for someone older, that’s just perfect as well because it means your whole leave isn’t going on taking days off for those things” (HW2).*

4.6.2 Work-Life Balance

For fifteen participants including homeworkers and managers, balancing home and work commitments was the reason for homeworking. Work-life balance was defined differently depending on circumstances, but included attending medical appointments and accepting deliveries. Attending appointments near home avoided lengthy journeys to or from the appointment during working hours. Participants classed commuting as part of work and

included it within the work-life balance definition. Avoiding the commute by public transport into London was the most common work-life balance benefit:

“it’s just having the flexibility of not having the additional kind of commute to London, braving a tortuous journey on the Northern line. I think it actually does break the week up quite nicely because it gives you a bit of time, you know you get that extra half an hour in bed or whatever when you’re not having to worry about commuting” (HW6).

Fitting domestic chores around work was also a benefit, *“it’s about trying to fit in the other things one needs to do in life” (HW3)*. One homeworker exercised during her working day:

“I have just gone off for a quick run and then come back and the you know not have to worry about being presentable again you can just sit in sweaty sloppy clothes for the rest of the afternoon because nobody knows” (HW8).

4.6.3 Work Environment

For some homeworkers home provided a quieter environment for concentration without distractions, unlike the office which was full of interruptions, people dropping by to chat, meetings and phone calls. Having space to think away from the nuisance of colleagues in open plan was important:

“it provides me with quiet time just to think and to read and to absorb without the disturbance of my colleagues and the questions and the queries and the phone going, it gives you the quiet space you don’t allows get in the office environment” (HW1).

In summary, the key reasons for homeworking were the ability to combine work with caring duties or domestic tasks, or to escape the office environment. However, Participants across all groups also mentioned that having more laptops was useful for emergency homeworking for example during bad weather or transport disruption.

4.7 Why Employees Do Not Work from Home

Despite homeworking being an expectation, non-homeworkers chose not to or were prevented from doing so by managers. Those choosing not to homework mentioned three main reasons, home environment, social issues and technology.

4.7.1 Home Environment Factors

Eight non-homeworkers lived in homes unsuited to homeworking, four in flats which lacked sufficient space:

“I find my studio big enough for me but there is no space, nothing spare, it’s all taken up, I have a table which could be used as a work table but it’s littered with stuff rather than with a PC and a keyboard” (NHW3).

Size of accommodation was not the only constraint. One manager’s colleague occupied a rented room and was restricted in what he could do and when:

“they’re actually renting a room in someone’s house and it wasn’t practical and they didn’t feel they were encouraged by the person whose house they were sharing to actually be physically around all hours of the day” (MGR4).

Family members, parents, partners and children posed a problem for other non-homeworkers. One said her father would not like her working from home, another had an ailing partner at home and was concerned about separating home and work:

“it would be difficult for me in relation to the fact that my partner is at home and I do fear that more of my time would become entangled up, because he’s not very well and I wouldn’t be able to have that divide” (NHW5).

One manager’s colleague stopped homeworking because toddlers proved distracting. Another manager whose wife also home-worked only did so occasionally, as the home could not accommodate both.

The financial costs associated with homeworking for telephone, lighting and heating particularly during winter months, were highlighted. Also, homeworkers with season tickets felt commuting for fewer days each week represented poor value, although one worked two days from home and benefitted financially by not purchasing a season ticket.

4.7.2 Social Factors

Non-homeworkers also highlighted social factors which deterred them from homeworking, specifically isolation, individual personalities and preferences, and the perceived stigma. Most non-homeworkers mentioned isolation and missing out on team-working. Some focussed on their dislike of feeling isolated at home, while others missed socialising at work:

“I like the social aspect of being in the office, I like my colleagues. I would miss them if I was at home. It’s basically just the camaraderie of working closely with colleagues and the general chit chat” (NHW3).

Work-related interactions were also important, non-homeworkers felt they would miss out on networking and other opportunities in the office if they were absent for more than one day a week. One explained:

“it’s about overhearing what people are saying, getting a buzz for what’s going on, what’s important and all that kind of thing and I think that we as a team, I think we’re pretty good bouncing off each other. All of that doesn’t happen if you’re at home” (NHW8).

Views differed on the optimum amount of homeworking before individuals became isolated. Some felt one or two days weekly was fine, others felt in a busy environment it was possible to feel isolated homeworking one day per week due to missing work-related and social interactions with colleagues.

Personal preference and personality also influenced the decision not to undertake homeworking. For non-homeworkers who enjoyed routine and lacked self-discipline to ignore distractions at home, attending the office each day was important, *“I found that my hours were very, very irregular because it took me an awful long time to find the discipline to get started so I’m not the ideal homeworker” (NHW3).*

Despite the expectation, three non-homeworkers were reluctant to homework because of the stigma and negative comments. For example, when colleagues worked from home one homeworker admitted thinking “*hang on a minute are they really working from home?*” (HW7). Another described “*a slight bit of eyeball rolling ‘oh working from home’ kind of thing*” (HW6). Others thought suspicion and lack of trust from colleagues acted to ‘police’ homeworking:

“I do wonder if people at my level are looking across at each other and almost policing each other in terms of people are pulling the wool a bit and not working when they should be” (HW1).

This perceived lack of trust summed up by a manager who commented:

“There was an assumption and that sends a message out that we’re kind of all a little bit suspicious and subject to scrutiny because we’re not that committed, not that dedicated” (MGR4).

4.7.3 Technology

Technology was viewed as both a barrier to and enabler of homeworking. Homeworkers described the danger of not switching off and being available at all hours. In contrast, a dislike of laptops, alongside poor broadband connections, were identified as barriers together with poor technology provision. The lack of either an individual or pool laptop was a significant barrier to homeworking:

“In some areas it’s really hard for people to get their hands on a laptop which seems a bit silly really because you are expecting people to work from home and then not giving them the tools to do their job” (HW4).

4.7.4 Positives of Working in the Office

Most non-homeworkers said being in the office was important to them and influenced their decision not to homework despite the policy. They wanted to be accessible so colleagues could find them and they could find other employees, particularly senior staff. One described feeling more in touch with stakeholders when she was in the office. Being able to talk to colleagues face-to-face, for example asking a senior colleague a question, was an advantage of office working. Similarly, being able to stand up and see who was around was a benefit, *“I don’t have to phone or e-mail them. I can just nip over, have a quick chat with them and often the work gets done quicker that way”* (NHW1).

4.7.5 Restricted by Work Factors or Role

Regardless of grade or working pattern, both homeworkers and non-homeworkers felt the policy only applied to certain grades despite that not being the case. A third of participants thought it was only for senior people whilst a fifth thought it was easier for higher grades to undertake homeworking. Two participants both said, *“it’s only for the higher grades”* (NHW4 and NHW7).

Managers had mixed views about which grades could undertake homeworking. Three thought homeworking was suitable for all, whereas two believed it more likely middle managers would do it because *“they all do similar types of work and the demands are the same”* (MGR2). One manager thought grade less important than the job as the organisation was saying *“most things could be done from home and meetings should use tele or video conferencing, the grade of the individual is irrelevant. It is what the role is about”* (MGR6). A homeworker suggested a

possible explanation for the difference between policy expectation and employees' perception that it only applied to higher grades:

"The more junior you are I think making the case to work from home may not be as simple and as easy as when you're a higher grade where you can perhaps articulate more and the nature of your work lends itself more to homeworking because of your role and responsibilities" (HW4).

For junior employees in support roles the presence or absence of other colleagues was important. A non-homeworker from a business support team would not homework if colleagues were out because she believed she should be physically available despite her job description not requiring it, *"I like to make sure that there's always someone around in case anyone from the business needs help" (NHW4)*. Another junior non-homeworker would not homework if her manager was away because *"in the type of role I do, particularly because she's away in meetings often off-site or working from home herself, it is easier to have someone in the office just in case there's an emergency" (NHW1)*. She was however unable to describe such an emergency. Two homeworkers believed junior staff were expected to be in the office, despite the homeworking policy. One explained: *"I'm admin staff and it's like we are not valued at all, we are not respected you know, so we are supposed to be in and because of grade" (NHW7)*.

One non-homeworker knew the policy applied to everyone but still believed he was expected in the office: *"I'm a junior grade, you're meant to be in the office" (NHW4)*. Both homeworkers and non-homeworkers thought managers made assumptions about junior employees' work

when deciding on homeworking requests, rather than discussing it with them to gain a better understanding of their tasks and which could be done at home.

4.7.6 Discrimination

Three non-homeworkers reported feeling subject to racial and sex discrimination in not being allowed to homework, one said:

“If I had to be in the office say for example I was something operational or that type of remit as I was before I think then I could completely understand. I think the problem I’ve got is that I’ve been singled out and whether it’s for race, sex or whatever I don’t know but it’s something that my manager doesn’t like so therefore I can’t do it” (NHW9).

A homeworker from an ethnic minority believed there were managers who did not trust junior staff from ethnic minorities to homework:

“from chats with people I have known for years who are junior grades and who are ethnic minorities as well, there is still a resistance to not having your staff member present on a day-to-day basis” (HW1).

4.8 Managers’ Views on the Homeworking Policy

Managers were asked how their role been affected by the policy, particularly deciding on homeworking requests as although homeworking was expected, when and how often was agreed by the manager. When questioned about the impact on decision making, managers

either spoke of their power being diminished and eroded by the policy, or they described retaining some element of control.

4.8.1 Impact on Decision Making Power

A key finding was most managers felt the new policy left them unable to refuse homeworking because of the expectation. One explained *“if somebody wants to work two days a week from home the default I think from my understanding of the organisation would be to say yes”* (MGR1). She felt she had no air cover to refuse, she explained:

“Given the way technology is going there’s not that many reasons why somebody can’t work from home and there is the relationship side but there wouldn’t be.....I don’t know how many jobs there are really in the office that you have to be there” (MGR1).

Most managers agreed requests would be granted, even if they presented operational challenges. One said he might refuse a request on limited grounds, for example to ensure office cover. Managers also felt since many senior managers worked from home, to refuse a request would be unfair: *“it would be awkward or difficult to say to somebody yes its fine for these people but not for you”* (MGR3).

The policy confirmed homeworking as an expectation, but did not specify how often or when. Managers however felt staff saw it as an entitlement which couldn’t be refused:

“I find that as a manager it pulls the rug from under you, you’ve got to really have a rock-solid reason as to why you’d refuse it and even if you think it’s going to be difficult

you've got to demonstrate almost to the nth degree that this can't be accommodated"
(MGR5).

Managers questioned whether there was a decision to make, even with a valid reason for refusing a request. They felt the power to decide had been removed, *"it's not even a decision it's a given that the organisation has said people work from home and that's that"* (MGR6). Managers sympathised with colleagues who had to refuse requests for business reasons as they felt organisational support was lacking:

"I pity managers who are in a position of having to say no because I feel it's difficult for them, I certainly feel I've got no support above me, you're required to do your job as a manager but without much support from the organisation apart from a line that says it's fine for people to work from home and no real caveats around it" (MGR5).

The feelings of being exposed and powerless were common amongst managers, worried about refusing homeworking requests they would instead escalate the decision to senior management, recognising that senior managers too faced competing pressures of organisational expectation versus business need. Managers also complained they were powerless to alter homeworking arrangements if an employee was required in the office on a scheduled homeworking day:

"If someone is working at home for childcare reasons like taking to school or picking up from school it becomes a way of working so then if you say to them 'I need you in the office that day' it's tricky because they can turn around and say, "I can't sort out childcare" which as a manager leaves you feeling without a leg to stand on" (MGR6).

A manager inherited a junior employee with a fixed homeworking day for childcare reasons, he felt he could not require them to change the day, so covered any office-based work himself despite it being poor use of his time. Homeworkers also mentioned managers' reluctance to require homeworkers to attend the office:

“Managers are sometimes scared of approving people working from home. They don't know how to approach the employee if they need them to come in and they say, ‘well it's my working at home day’. How does a manager approach that and say no you need to come in?” (HW8).

Given their reluctance to refuse homeworking requests, managers were asked how they balanced homeworking with business need. It appeared they hoped homeworkers would fit around the needs of the team, effectively giving power to the employee:

“I rely on the individual asking for homeworking to behave responsibly so I rely on them to structure the homeworking around the demands of the job which everybody has done with no problems at all so far” (MGR2).

Two managers mentioned refusing homeworking requests. However, questioning revealed the managers compromised rather than refused because of the policy expectation. In one case, two employees undertaking similar work both requested homeworking on Fridays, the manager asked them to reconsider their requests to ensure cover in the office each day. In the second case an employee requested homeworking every day. The manager agreed a short-term pilot reviewing after three months, at which point both manager and employee agreed it was unsatisfactory. Most managers believed one or two days homeworking each week was

acceptable, more would pose difficulties in terms of an employee's ability to do their job, their visibility and connection to the organisation, and career progression.

Despite the reported erosion of managerial power to refuse homeworking requests, there were four examples of requests being refused for non-homeworkers or their colleagues. These findings echo those on consistency discussed previously, where participants felt the policy was implemented unfairly with some managers continuing to refuse requests.

4.8.2 Factors Affecting Homeworking Decisions

In balancing homeworking with business need, managers mentioned two other factors. The timing of regular on-site meetings commonly took place midweek which, when coupled with the popularity of Mondays and Fridays for homeworking, resulted in desk shortages on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. One manager explained the challenges:

“Bizarrely because of the pressure we are having on accommodation we are about to launch a campaign to say don't work from home on Fridays because that's when there's always loads of empty desks whereas on Tuesdays and Wednesdays it's much busier. A lot of people work from home on Fridays because other people work from home on Friday and there aren't meetings and therefore their diary is freer so it's easier to work from home on Friday's so it's a bit of a vicious circle” (MGR3).

In some teams, policy implementation was affected by the number of contractors who were expected to be on-site but were not covered by the policy. Thus, the expectation of homeworking to release desks had a greater impact on permanent staff. Managers therefore

were reluctant to refuse requests because if not enough staff undertook homeworking desk space would be inadequate.

4.8.3 Levels of Manager Support

Findings suggest managerial support for the policy varied. Homeworkers and some non-homeworkers had managers who actively promoted it resulting in a significant number of colleagues undertaking homeworking. Non-homeworkers however, generally found their managers to be less supportive. Managers who themselves undertook homeworking were more supportive than office-based managers:

“There’s an issue of consistency and I think what strikes me maybe rightly or wrongly is those managers, regardless of where they sit in the organisation, who are working flexibly themselves, perhaps they get it that bit more” (HW3).

Other homeworkers however thought it unnecessary for managers to role-model homeworking if they understood and implemented the policy, *“it’s more around the individual, the manager who gets it and who understands will reap the benefits and therefore there will be more people working remotely” (HW8).*

Four participants, homeworkers and non-homeworkers, had unsupportive managers. One requested a laptop for homeworking for medical reasons, her manager took seven weeks to authorise it and was then was reluctant for her use it:

“now it has finally been authorised he’s turned around and said yes but you still won’t be able to be doing those flexible hours because it depends on business need but he hasn’t told me what this business need is” (NHW9).

Another reported moving to a different role where she could homework as her previous manager forbade it *“I had been doing homeworking and when the new manager came along she stopped it, so I moved jobs” (HW2).*

Inconsistency of approach was highlighted by a homeworker whose new manager required greater justification and information:

“I’m not too sure I get the same kind of support with the current manager in so far as I feel I’m needing to flesh out and justify the reasons for which I do it, which I didn’t expect to have to do on the basis that it’s just a continuation” (HW3).

Although managers need not model homeworking behaviour, participants believed those who home-worked themselves ‘got it’, whereas those who did not appeared wedded to old ways of working and were unsupportive of homeworking.

4.9 The Concept of Trust

Trust or lack of it was a theme in the interviews. Non-homeworkers were suspicious of homeworkers and whether they were really working; homeworkers were suspicious of each other, particularly where they believed colleagues had roles unsuited to homeworking and could not demonstrate their outputs. Half the non-homeworkers interviewed and two

homeworkers suspected that homeworking colleagues were taking advantage and doing less work than if in the office. One junior non-homeworker questioned whether homeworkers had enough work to be doing it, *“especially at my level, are they working from home, what are they doing if they haven’t got enough work to do?”* (NHW4).

A non-homeworker described how she and her fellow non-homeworkers spoke about homeworkers:

“oh yeah I think they actually might be working from home, or I don’t really know what they’re doing. It’s almost this kind of murmuring about really what the hell do they actually do, we don’t see much of them” (NHW8).

Suspicious that homeworkers may be avoiding work were not confined to non-homeworkers. Homeworkers themselves mentioned the lack of supervision when homeworking and their desire to have an output at the end of the day, but they suspected others may be less conscientious:

“I know lots of people who work from home but do nearly sweet nothing which is frustrating because that’s not what it’s for but I think people do, and it’s not a day off, you’ve just chosen to work from home” (HW6).

Fear of homeworking was raised, with homeworkers and non-homeworkers worried about the stigma of homeworkers as lazy, resulting in examples of working longer or more conscientiously than in the office:

“If I was at home I’d probably work even longer hours because I’d have to demonstrate even more so the fact that I was clearing the work, that I wasn’t sort of sloping off and doing house work and washing” (NHW5).

Homeworkers also worried about answering the telephone quickly to avoid colleagues thinking they were not working:

“I find myself carrying the phone to the kitchen to make a cup of tea or go and answer the door or even just going into another room I panic if I haven’t got the phone with me because I think if I don’t answer it immediately people will think I’m not working from home. In terms of trust I feel really paranoid that I’ve got to demonstrate that almost every minute of every day I’m immediately available and working” (HW7).

Presenteeism, or being visible in the office, emerged as a theme. Participants used this term in relation to managers who trusted employees to work from home, managing by results and output rather than judging based on presenteeism and observing employees working in the office.

4.9.1 Presenteeism

Once homeworking was agreed, managers valued outputs over presenteeism, trusting employees to work and managing by results regardless of where people sat. They saw this as integral to flexibility, one explained *“you’ve got flexible time and within that I shall judge you by results”* (MGR3). The advantage of managing by results was highlighted:

“You’ve got more chance of getting high performing teams out of the type of arrangement because you are focussing on delivery rather than presenteeism”
(MGR2).

Managers trusted employees if they were not abusing the system. Managers identified abuse by specifying outputs and monitoring whether milestones were met as evidence of work carried out. Homeworkers supported the management by results approach:

“My manager is quite open to it as long as people are not abusing the system or the fact they are able to work from home, so long as they do their work, they’ve got a product. Rather than saying I’m working from home today, at least they can show that they are actually doing some work as they would if they were sitting at their desk”
(HW5).

Not all homeworkers’ managers practised management by results, but all except one believed their manager trusted them and created trust by using communication, *“it’s a lot about communication between individual and managers and the other thing I suppose is the manager is also allowing the individuals to be adults as well”* (HW5).

The preferred communication for making homeworkers feel trusted was informal keeping-in-touch. Homeworkers explained how they also instigated informal checking-in to build trust:

“I made a point of on Friday speaking to my manager who was a senior manager and saying this is what I’m doing, and on Monday I’d come back to her and say this is what

I've done, so I made a point of doing that myself. Until after three or four months she said it wasn't necessary she knew what I was doing and she trusted me" (HW8).

Another explained how communication made her feel trusted, *"I don't feel a need to check in kind of thing, at lunchtime I might do a courtesy, 'hope things are going well' kind of thing but that's more to just let them know you're alive rather than, I don't feel checked up on" (HW6).*

In contrast, managers had a different perspective on trust, describing the desire to check on people and, unlike homeworkers, communication was not mentioned. Managers questioned whether using IT to check whether employees were on line breached privacy:

"the ability to look at people's time on line is difficult because is that legitimate as a manager that you would check whether somebody's on line or not, or is that an invasion of somebody's privacy?" (MGR2).

Despite checking up on staff, all managers believed that for homeworking to work they should trust people:

"If as a manager you start worrying about it and you haven't got that trust then I think you're going to tie yourself in knots agonising about that and trying to put mechanisms in place to check up on them" (MGR6).

4.10 The Impact of Homeworking on Career Progression

All participants were asked if they thought homeworking affected career progression. Across all groups opinions varied, some felt it did, others thought it did not, others were unsure and highlighted other factors.

Interviewees who believed homeworking affected career progression cited lack of visibility as the key reason. Half of non-homeworkers, a third of homeworkers and all except one manager highlighted the advantage of being office-based when considering career progression. A common phrase was 'out of sight out of mind', describing the risk that homeworkers may be invisible and forgotten:

"It shouldn't have any impact but there's always the thought, whether people are forgotten, not quite forgotten because they are doing the work, but they're not here making a visual impact" (NHW5).

The importance of being seen was echoed by a homeworker who said:

"if you're not in the middle of it, in the buzz of the office, people can leap to the conclusion that you're not interested in the work or the organisation so why would you be the one to be promoted" (HW7).

One manager warned his team to be careful about visibility and people's perceptions of them as some managers had a dim view of homeworking and *"a dimmer view of people who work from home on a Friday than other days"* (MGR3). Similarly, a manager of a high performing team of homeworkers received complaints about her team's invisibility from her senior Director. When the Director countersigned the team's annual reports, he ignored their results instead focussing on their absence from the office, saying: *"Well I don't really know them, well I never see them, they don't seem to get involved in very much, then again they're never here"* (MGR4). The impact on performance reports was echoed by another manager who felt

homeworkers risked *“a fall in visibility which may well rebound when the reports are done”* (MGR3).

Colleagues opinions were also important for some interviewees who felt it important that other employees could see they were present, *“I feel that I’m seen, I’m there, I’m available, people can see I’m available even if I’m no more available than if I was at home”* (MGR6). How feedback from colleagues fed into annual appraisals was raised by non-homeworkers who believed homeworkers were at a disadvantage because of the few colleagues able to provide feedback. They could not see what homeworkers were contributing and therefore could not provide input, which was a disadvantage in the appraisal system:

“I think you have to have a presence in the office to be noticed under our performance management system so I think too much invisibility because of too much homeworking does have an impact, if you are working from home you can be off the radar. We know it’s not just about the quality of your work, it’s the reputation and the impact you’ve made on the senior people” (MGR1).

The opportunity to make an impact was recognised by participants across all groups when referring to the career advantages of being office-based, *‘It can help raise your profile with senior people if you are in the office and can be the one to help, whereas if you at home you’re less likely to be contacted’* (NHW9). Being able to pick up information in the office, or being more ‘in the know’ was also seen as important. A third of the all interviewees thought office-based staff had a better knowledge of what was going on either from networking with colleagues, informal conversations or picking up on the atmosphere in the office.

Alongside visibility, the perception of homeworkers as lazy or part-time could adversely affect career progression. As highlighted in the section on trust, participants mentioned the perception that homeworkers were lazy even if they were as productive as office-based colleagues. Therefore, in terms of career progression being out of sight could mean being out of mind and forgotten or be thought of as being less productive or lazy.

The view of homeworkers as lazy was described as enduring and difficult to shake particularly regarding the appraisal system:

“Those perceptions stick and once someone is put in that category I think you need to do everything you can, people look for excuses to say that you’re underperforming once you’ve been labelled that way, I think because of the performance management system there’s probably scape-goating, looking for somebody to put in that category” (MGR2).

Combining homeworking with caring responsibilities could be perceived as contributing less than other colleagues, and therefore adversely affect appraisals and career progression. An example was how the level of commitment of a homeworking mother or someone with elderly parents might be perceived in contrast to a graduate living close to work. A manager described how a graduate would:

“Work as long as necessary in the evening because they’ve got no ties at home, can be in first thing in the morning and they’re very, visible and consequently there’s a perception that they’re the go-getting high performing people and the mother working at home because of childcare just isn’t giving as much to the job and that reflects in performance marks and possibly promotion discussions” (MGR6).

Old fashioned attitudes to homeworking and the expectation that employees would be present in the office was cited by almost half of all participants as potentially affecting career progression. One non-homeworker heard people saying, *“he’s never here”*, about homeworkers and therefore:

“they get a lot of negative comment because they’re not around, when in fact they’re doing a thing that’s been agreed with the organisation, that the organisation is supposed to be requiring” (NHW6).

Another non-homeworker described his manager’s openness about his old-fashioned view:

“He personally has said to me that it doesn’t fit in with the way he does things. He doesn’t like the idea of homeworking because the persons not around, he says yes you can call him but you’re still not in the office” (NHW9).

Senior managers particularly expected to see people in the office. A homeworker observed that at senior levels there were more older managers who remembered a different way of working and saw homeworking as *“public servants lounging around doing internet shopping and laundry”* (HW8). It was suggested managers stuck in the past needed training to understand homeworkers could do as well or better than office-based staff, so homeworkers careers were not adversely affected. It was also recognised that having inflexible homeworking arrangements with immovable days would not help career progression. Homeworking was also felt to rule people out of progressing into roles where demands of the job conflicted with homeworking, for example if frequent travelling was required.

Four participants had the opposite view believing homeworking would not affect career progression if the homeworker was confident, did not require input from others to achieve their career goals and responded flexibly to business need. However, if the homeworker was an underperformer it would be harder for them to provide evidence of improvement as their efforts would lack visibility.

When asked about homeworking and career progression, over a third of participants said they had not considered it. They thought it should not affect careers, but had concerns as expressed by a non-homeworker, *“that’s an interesting one and a complex one. I mean it shouldn’t, should it?”* (NHW6). Two homeworkers and two non-homeworkers thought it may depend on whether the homeworker’s manager was supportive. A homeworker from a Trade Union suggested the equality impact should be monitored as could be a detrimental effect on the careers of female homeworkers.

In conclusion, a non-homeworker summed up the uncertainty around the policy by pointing out it could be a double-edged sword for employees in terms of career progression:

“There is a certain amount of unease and resentment in certain quarters so I’m sure a lot of people would be very sensitive to any criticism one way or the other, for coming in when it’s wanted for them to be away, or being away when they are expected to be in” (NHW6).

The following chapter will discuss these key findings in the context of relevant literature.

5. Discussion

In this chapter the key findings of this study are discussed. The chapter is structured to reflect the previous chapter which echoes the research questions.

5.1 Communications

As highlighted in the Introduction, the Change Team designed the homeworking policy in response to the need for greater flexibility in how work was structured, and reduced accommodation costs. The initiative met its objective of increasing the amount of homeworking, leading to a reduction in the demand for desks and aligning organisational requirements with reduced office space. However, this study demonstrates the policy did not achieve the expectation of all employees undertaking one to two days homeworking, thus failing to embed different ways of working into the culture as discussed in the Introduction. Kotter (1995) suggests change is difficult to embed, and, as Burnes (2004) points out, 40-70% of initiatives fail to meet their objectives, as in this study. The change being implemented in this study could be viewed as discontinuous as it was not part of a series of change programmes, nor an expensive programme (Guimares & Armstrong, 1998). Holloway (2017) suggests the benefits of such programmes may be short-lived. However, the key benefit of embedding homeworking for everyone in the culture of the organisation was not actually achieved. This study's findings suggest understanding of the policy and uncertainty about its intent amongst employees led to variations in implementation. Some managers embraced and championed the change thus increasing homeworking, which may grow further over time. However, the variation in implementation raises questions about communication, which will be considered in the next section.

In the change management literature, Begley (1998) identifies effective communication as key to mitigating employee concerns and uncertainty, particularly around introducing perceived stressors affecting daily routines, for example office-based work (Jimmieson et al., 2004). Prior to implementing the homeworking change the organisation produced a clear policy, plus a significant amount of intranet communications, briefing sessions and webchats describing the policy, aligning with Matland's (1995) top down approach to policy implementation. However, this research revealed considerable variation in both levels of awareness of the policy and sources of information used, with unofficial verbal information from colleagues being a significant source. Over half of participants referred to a lack of information, difficulty finding it, and official communications lacking in detail. This is not uncommon according to Thomas, Zolin and Hartman (2009) who concluded that regardless of the number of written communications employees receive, they will inevitably want more. Research by Mishra, Boynton and Mishra (2014), examined this desire for more communication and identified the importance of informal communications or the grapevine, an important source of information for participants in this study. Zimmerman et al. (1996) found employees believed important information arrived via the grapevine rather than formal channels, a belief echoed by participants in this study who reported hearing about the policy through colleagues' 'chit-chat' and gossip they heard in kitchens, corridors or lifts; in other words, the grapevine.

Thomas et al. (2009) found employees to be more trusting and less uncertain of change when receiving accurate, relevant and timely information from supervisors. That employees in this study appeared to rely on the grapevine and informal information from colleagues, calls into question the effectiveness with which senior managers communicated corporate messages. A task they were expected to fulfil when the Communications Team designed messages for cascade to junior levels. Participants however reported seeing little information from senior

managers in bulletins or briefings resulting in a disconnect between the intended sources of information and the actual sources used by employees, supporting the findings of Mishra et al. (2014) who recognised such a disconnect. The findings from this study support those of Zimmerman et al. (1996) who found employees use and refer to the grapevine as a source of information because they perceive information from management as inadequate. The findings from this study, identifying the prevalence of the grapevine and colleagues as information sources, are consistent with those of Harcourt et al. (1991) who found the grapevine was perceived as a better source of information than formal organisational communications. Thomas et al. (2009) found supervisors were key in showing workers the connection between their roles and organisational goals. Failing in that role means employees look to informal communication channels for information as they appear to have done in this study, relying on colleagues rather than information from managers.

This study found team discussions and informal conversations with colleagues were the main sources of information for all grades, including managers, with more being gleaned from colleagues, including details missing from official communications. Formal communications were therefore perceived as arriving later and containing less detail than informal channels, causing staff to rely on the grapevine to discover what was happening. This supports the findings of Shahaida and Nargundkar (2006) who found informal communications travel faster down the grapevine than communications along formal channels. Messages arrived faster and often pre-dated formal communications, which simply confirmed what was already known and contained no new information (Zimmerman et al., 1996).

The information produced by the organisation was written by communications professionals and trialled within the Change Team. There was therefore an expectation it would be effective

in communicating to employees. However, the ineffectiveness of the communications was evident as participants relied upon colleagues and the grapevine for information rather than the official communications. This may be explained by research undertaken by Bordia et al. (2004) who found that although strategic uncertainty could be addressed using well written management messages, when organisational change directly affected individual job roles or working practices, employees preferred the participative nature of a team discussion or conversation with a colleague to reduce their uncertainty. Hargie and Tourish (2000) found during periods of organisational change employees turn to different information sources including colleagues, managers and senior staff depending on the issue. Therefore, targeted communication strategies which distinguish the different issues employees may be concerned about are more likely to succeed (Allen et al., 2007). The communications in this study reiterated the purposes and aims of the homeworking policy and the expectation employees would comply. However, despite using different channels, communications were not targeted or differentiated. Research by Armenakis et al. (1999) identified five components of change messages - discrepancy, efficacy, appropriateness, principal support and personal valence - as being necessary to influence employees' likelihood of supporting or resisting change. These components may help to explain why participants in this study appeared to be unaware of communications, perceived messages as unclear and contradictory, and formed differing views on why the change was being introduced. The next section discusses these components in more detail.

The first domain of discrepancy relates to persuading individuals of the need for change. According to Katz and Kahn (1978) this can be achieved by illustrating to individuals the gap between the organisation's required future state and current state, thus persuading them of the need to change. Although in this study the organisation described what needed to change

and why, communications did not illustrate explicitly the gap between present and future state to create a compelling need for change. The communications stated the need for change, describing the current and future state in terms of employees to desks ratios, thus illustrating the gap and making case for change in terms of office space. However, when referring to the need to change how the organisation worked in terms of increased homeworking, there was no equivalent illustration of current and future states in the context of working practices. When questioned, none of the participants firmly believed that change was required, thus supporting the theory of Katz and Kahn (1978) that the discrepancy between the current and future state needs to be explicitly illustrated for employees to feel compelled to change.

Armenakis et al. (1999) identified efficacy as the second domain, describing it as how confident individuals are about their ability to succeed in implementing a change. Their level of confidence can impact upon the likelihood of the change being a success. The findings of this study suggest the confidence participants had in their ability to implement the homeworking policy was less of an issue than their decision whether to implement it. The contradictory messages given by senior and middle managers caused participants to question whether the organisation wanted to change or not. Faced with such contradiction it would therefore be difficult for an individual to be confident of success (Cole, Harris & Bernerth, 2006). Lack of technology also impacted upon implementation of the scheme, with participants highlighting the requirement for homeworking being contradicted by a lack of laptops or the refusal of a laptop. The findings therefore support Armenakis and Harris's (2002) theory that efficacy is important. Participants appeared to lack confidence in their ability to implement homeworking as expected, although for some this may have been influenced by their dislike of homeworking. Mixed messages from managers, lack of technology and confusion over the

interpretation of 'expectation' left employees confused and uncertain of what was being asked of them, which can adversely affect the likelihood of success (Rafferty & Griffin, 2006).

Appropriateness of change is the third component of Armenakis and Harris's (2002) theory. Individuals may be persuaded of the need for change but not be convinced the proposed change is the right one. Participants did not necessarily see the homeworking policy as an inappropriate response to the challenge of reducing office space. However, although it may have been an appropriate response at an organisational level, at an individual level for some participants it was impractical and therefore according to Gregory, Armenakis, Moates, Albritton and Harris (2007), less likely to be implemented successfully. In this study for individuals who could not, or would not, homework for practical or personal reasons, to expect homeworking was inappropriate, and they therefore resisted the change and did not implement the policy. According to Armenakis and Harris (2002) such resistance can be useful in indicating to an organisation that the change may not be appropriate for all and should be reconsidered. The organisation did not pilot test the homeworking policy prior to launch nor was it reviewed, at the time of this study, to assess whether a universal expectation of homeworking was inappropriate and flexibility was required.

On-going support, resources and commitment to see change through is identified as the fourth component of the theory (Armenakis et al., 1999). Without them, employees may be sceptical and unconvinced of the need for change (Armenakis & Harris, 2002). Participants described messages from middle managers as being at odds with messages from senior staff, with no visible on-going championing of the policy. Indeed, when asked about manager attitudes, there was evidence of senior managers publicly demonstrating their lack of support for the policy and managers refusing to honour existing homeworking arrangements. The discomfort

felt by some managers in implementing the policy is in line with research by Collins et al. (2013) who found supervisory staff reluctant to give up the control they exercised through traditional office-based working patterns.

The final element of Armenakis et al.'s (1999) theory is personal valence within the communications and messages, or what is in it for individuals personally. A strong theme throughout this research was individuals' reflections on the pros and cons of the change as it affected them and particularly the perceived fairness for different individuals. Cobb et al. (1995) found during change individuals will calculate and assess the winners and losers and fairness with a view to resisting change if their self-interest is threatened (Clarke et al., 1996). In this research, the imposition of a universal policy of expected homeworking appeared to be a fair principle as it applied to all employees equally. However, in terms of policy implementation it clearly did not operate as planned due to some managers undermining the policy by refusing homeworking requests, therefore fairness as a principle was undermined.

While the communications messages were factually correct, closer examination revealed a lack of sophistication, the focus being on announcements and provision of information for controlling and directing employees (Smith & Mounter, 2005). For example, the statement at Appendix 2 is dictatorial in style with its use of 'we as the Executive Committee have decided'. The statement does not read as though supporting and promoting flexibility and adaptation to change in the work environment (Tourish & Hargie, 2004). For example, "we expect you to work **one and up to two days a week** (approximately 40% of your working hours) remotely from home" is a clear direction. L'Etang (2008) highlighted the importance of undertaking preparatory work to assess the communication culture and political climate within an organisation before launching a change initiative. However, the organisation in this study did

not assess culture, climate or staff attitudes prior to communicating the change. Conrad and Poole (2005) identify the importance of using varied communication channels and tailoring messages to persuade an audience, whatever the message. In this case, although varied communication channels were used, for example television screens, webinars and cascade briefings, there was no segmentation of the audience into groups such as those already homeworking and those not. Nor was there any tailoring of messages to take account of the complex combinations of ethical, interpersonal, organisational and personal factors which employees contend with when making choices (Conrad & Poole, 2005).

5.2 Implementation of the Policy

5.2.1 Type of Work

In launching a policy expecting everyone to undertake homeworking regardless of their role, tasks or level in the organisation, the organisation was aiming for fairness. Studies have shown however that type of work can impact on the ability to homework where it is discretionary, with for example, lower graded clerical workers having difficulty getting permission to undertake homeworking (Huws, Korte & Robinson, 1990; Mokhtarian, Bagley & Salomon, 1998; Tomaskovic-Devey & Risman, 1993). This research found individuals themselves distinguished between tasks suited to homeworking and those that were not, for example identifying tasks such as organising complex meetings as unsuitable. This aligns with the findings of Mokhtarian et al. (1998) who established it was the idiosyncratic elements of an individual's job, as opposed to generalised categories of work, which determined whether an employee was likely to homework. In the literature, the ideal homeworker is an information worker (Bailey & Kurland, 2002) as the participants of this study are. However, within that definition the results show individuals focussed on specific duties in their role when considering homeworking. Support staff preferred having physical proximity to colleagues

even though their specific duties did not require it. There was also a focus on the practical elements of some roles which would preclude homeworking, for example printing and filing, even though no role was composed solely of such activities. This supports the findings of Mokhtarian and Salomon (1996) on self-perceptions of role unsuitability. They found employees used their first-hand knowledge of specific duties entailed in their roles to decide not to homework, concluding the job could not be realistically undertaken away from the office.

A further factor, related to type of work, which was identified as relevant in deciding whether to homework or not was the need for a quiet environment to concentrate. Writing reports and reading papers, traditional tasks of a knowledge worker and ones requiring little face-to-face contact (Bailey & Kurland, 2002) were deemed suitable for homeworking. However, participants distinguished between working 'at home' carrying out the full duties of their role and working 'from home' which was defined as working on a project requiring quiet and therefore being less contactable. Undertaking different types of tasks at home is covered in the literature but the nomenclature of working 'at' home or 'from' home and attaching different meaning to 'at' and 'from' is not a distinction which is explored specifically in the literature, yet in this study it emerged as a distinction in the narratives of participants and therefore may warrant future research.

5.2.2 Impact on Staff Remaining in the Office

Hylmo (2006) recognised that introducing homeworking as a new form of work to an organisation requires all members to engage in legitimising the change, not just homeworkers. Although the expectation was all staff would work from home to some extent, some non-

homeworkers wished to remain office-based and therefore did not see the change as being desirable or legitimate for themselves.

In line with previous research (Kugelmass, 1995; Collins, 2005), the findings from this study found homeworking led to increased workloads for colleagues remaining in the office, potentially leading to resentment amongst non-homeworkers. For example, participants in this study referred to themselves as the 'go to person' taking messages for homeworkers, an issue identified by Reinsch (1997) albeit in a study where homeworking was not an expectation. Participants in this study reported answering questions or resolving problems for homeworking colleagues, a finding which supports research by Gupta, Karimi and Somers (1995). Office-based staff therefore felt annoyed and frustrated with homeworking colleagues, in common with the findings of Ducharme and Martin (2000). However, the findings from this study also extend the literature, as unlike other studies, in this research participants' irritation with additional workload was in an organisation where homeworking was expected of all employees. It would be interesting to examine whether levels of dissatisfaction with additional workload were greater in organisations where homeworking was a perk or an expectation.

When homeworkers attended the office, they noticed office-based staff becoming irritated by requests from homeworking colleagues, for example being asked to search for people in the office. Homeworkers were therefore aware of the resentment and were reluctant to contact office-based colleagues supporting the findings of Collins, Hislop and Cartwright (2106) who also recognised this reluctance amongst homeworkers. However, in this study there was an expectation of homeworking and therefore this finding forms an addition to the literature.

Office-based workers reported additional work caused by employees from other areas dropping by their desks looking for homeworking colleagues, consistent with research by Yap and Tng (1990). Non-homeworkers were also irritated by being asked the whereabouts of other employees as though they held everyone's calendars in their head, this being despite the organisation introducing a facility allowing employees to view everyone's calendar. It seems the introduction of the policy plus tools and technology, failed to go together with changes in how employees worked. For example, comments suggest the culture was to walk round the office expecting to find colleagues, despite the homeworking policy and calendar tools provided. Fine et al. (2008) noted that often the tool kits and technical attributes of change are emphasized over the readiness and ability of employees and managers to adapt and use them effectively, as appears to be the case in this study.

Non-homeworkers also reported the additional problem of progressing tasks involving homeworkers as it meant contacting them and invariably waiting for a response, rather than being able to speak face-to-face, in common with the findings of Allen, Renn and Griffeth (2003). The sense of frustration was compounded by the reliance on technology-based communications such as e-mail or instant messaging which were acknowledged to be useful but only if homeworkers responded quickly and regularly. The frustration stemmed from having the available tools but homeworkers failing to use them, leading to delays. This supports the findings of Fine et al. (2008) who found that in change programmes attention must be paid to the human relations aspects.

The conference calls were highlighted as a source of frustration for both employees in the office and homeworkers, for several reasons. Lack of video conferencing facilities for example meant relying on tele-conferences, and participants found not being able to see people and their body language made it harder to understand the tone of the meeting and therefore make appropriate interventions. It was also hard to hear everyone clearly. Thus, although the technology was available, the quantity and quality of informational cues used to interpret personal interactions with colleagues was reduced (Golden, 2007). Participants therefore felt it was more difficult to hold a successful meeting when everyone was not together in the office.

5.3 Why Employees Decided to Work from Home

For those who worked from home, achieving a work-life balance was the predominant reason. However, work-life balance is a broad term used within the literature, and the features to be balanced vary amongst individuals (McMillan et al., 2011). Clark (2000) defines it as satisfaction and good functioning at home and work with a minimum of role conflict. Within this study undertaking caring responsibilities emerged as the main example of work-life balance with childcare being predominant in common with the findings of Blair-Loy and Wharton (2002). Their study of the use of work-family policies found caring duties to be the predominant reason for invoking the policy. In this study comments about the advantages of combining homeworking with school-run duties echo the findings of Woolliams and Trompenaars (2013), who found for some employees the advantages are significant in terms of work-life balance.

Applying Clark's (2000) definition of work-life balance to childcare would suggest employees worked at home to simply provide care for children. However, no one who mentioned childcare suggested they were filling the childcare role in the absence of another agent or agency. The importance of being with children and having quality interactions was the prime objective of working from home. Spending time with children, helping with homework and valuing the experience of picking them up from school aligns with the ideology of enhanced parenthood resulting from the progression towards more purposeful and structured childhoods (Arendell, 2001). This desire to plan, monitor and be more involved with activities of children places an additional workload on parents, with generally women assuming the greater role (Arendell, 2001). However, in this study, the desire to spend more time with children and be involved in their activities was reported by both mothers and fathers. An added benefit of spending more time with children at either end of the school day was savings in childcare costs. However, using homeworking as a substitute for full-time childcare did not emerge as an issue.

Previous research demonstrates successful implementation of work-life balance policies such as homeworking is dependent upon both employees and managers exercising the rights and responsibilities inferred upon them by the policy and taking up opportunities (DiMaggio, 1988). As studies by Osterman (1995) and Powell (1999) recognised, parents with caring responsibilities are critical to influencing the take-up of non-mandatory homeworking policies. However, in this study, where the policy expected everyone to undertake homeworking, take-up by parents appears not to have impacted on the success of the policy. A key finding was that participants who disliked homeworking appreciated other colleagues meeting the expectation, thereby freeing up desks and allowing them to remain office-based and not under pressure to comply with the expectation.

For three female participants in this study, caring for elderly relatives was the reason for working from home, care for elderly dependents being a primarily female activity (Lee & Tang, 2015). Although caregiving can range from full-time care to general assistance, the participants in this study appreciated being able to accommodate personal care needs within the homeworking arrangement, rather than using annual leave. For example, being able to accompany relatives to medical appointments which they would otherwise not be able to attend due travel difficulties or the need to be accompanied. Unlike caring for children, it was the ability to avoid using annual leave or sick leave to attend appointments which was the main benefit of homeworking for those caring for elders, rather than the need to be home with them regularly. This supports the findings of Gautun and Hagen (2010) who found annual leave, leave of absence and sickness absence being used by employees who cared for elderly parents. In this study, the perception of homeworking as a significant benefit when caring for elders is in line with findings by both Mooney, Statham and Simon (2002) and Phillips (1994) who found employees valued flexible working, including homeworking, as the most important benefit when juggling work and caring obligations. As observed by Lee and Tang (2015) the number of female care givers in employment has increased alongside increases in life expectancy, and a shift to care at home as opposed to by the medical profession in clinical settings, it is perhaps therefore not surprising elder care came up as a reason for homeworking in this study.

Almost half of participants used the opportunity to work from home to balance home and work demands. Setting aside caring responsibilities, the most popular reasons were domestic chores, medical appointments and avoiding commuting. The ability to do domestic chores was reported as being important by female participants in line with the findings of Kay (1998) and

Hilbrecht, Shaw, Johnson and Andrey (2008). Musson and Tietze (2003) found men were more likely to use improved work-life balance from flexible working for leisure activities. However, none of the male participants in this study did so, all reported using homeworking for childcare duties. One female participant did however fit exercise into the working day, which was the reason she worked from home, rather than for caring duties.

All participants had other reasons for working from home rather than simply meeting the expectation. The factors considered so far all relate to wanting to be at home. In other words, employees are 'pulled' towards the home environment for personal tasks or responsibilities. Homeworking however had another advantage which emerged during the research. It allowed employees to avoid the office environment, so employees were 'pushed' towards the home as a more desirable place to work than the office.

Participants described the office environment as being noisy and distracting, with colleagues chatting and fewer desks and hot-desking adding to the unpleasantness. Fewer desks meant it was necessary to arrive early to get a preferred desk or just a desk, leaving some participants who were late starters feeling disadvantaged. Hot desking was felt by some to be undesirable as teams no longer sat together and neighbours changed daily, which some participants found unsettling. The homeworking policy provided the opportunity to avoid noise, distractions and an unpleasant office environment for those who wished to do so, thus supporting the findings of Hartman, Stoner and Arora (1992), Duxbury and Neufeld, (1999). Collins et al. (2016) also discovered homeworking could provide an escape for employees from difficult social relationships in the office. However, that was not a finding of this study.

Within the literature concerning reasons for homeworking as a perk rather than an expectation, the ability to control working hours, breaks and other ambient factors is recognised as an important factor in the take-up of homeworking opportunities, for example in the study of clerical workers by Tietze and Nadin (2011). However, within this study where homeworking was expected, having autonomy to control the scheduling of work outside of the traditional office-based working day (Bailyn, 1989) did not feature. This may be because the work being undertaken and the office environment already provided some degree of autonomy, or participants did not want more autonomy. Additional flexibility over how and when one carried out one's tasks was not seen as sufficiently attractive by non-homeworkers to encourage them to work from home. Their reasons for not homeworking were such that the policy expectation did not influence them, let alone the opportunity to control when they worked. Indeed, for some, being able to be flexible about scheduling of their work was a worrying prospect as it required self-discipline which they did not necessarily have. Self-discipline and self-motivation were identified by Katz (1987) as characteristics of successful homeworkers and, in common with this study, Mokhtarian et al. (1998) found lack of self-discipline and the need for self-motivation to be a disadvantage for homeworking.

A meta-analysis by Kurtessis et al. (2015) found employees believed granting of homeworking requests demonstrated organisational support for individuals, particularly if the manager had exercised discretion in granting a request. In this study, employees valued homeworking for increased flexibility around non-work demands and removal of the commute to the workplace. Kurtessis et al. (2015) found employees may feel it necessary to reciprocate such organisational support with higher levels of loyalty and commitment. Findings from this study support Kurtessis et al. (2015) with several participants mentioning the likelihood that the

organisation would get increased work and commitment from employees in exchange for flexibility.

In common with the findings of Ashkanasy, Ayoko and Jehn (2014) who recognised the importance of the work environment and its impact upon employees' attitudes and behaviour, this study found when homeworking was combined with reduced office space and hot desking, individual attitudes towards homeworking were negatively related to beliefs about the loss of personal office space, supporting the findings of Lim and Teo (2000).

5.4 Why Employees Decided Not to Work from Home

Much research focuses on the benefits of homeworking at an individual level. However, in this study the expectation of homeworking was introduced without considering whether it was suitable for everyone. Barrett and Fudge (1981) and Hjern and Hull (1982) suggest, in their advocacy of a bottom-up approach to policy making, listening to the views of employees and managers. This may have resulted in a policy with flexibility to accommodate individual needs, particularly in the London context, in terms of employees' homes. By following a dual approach to policy implementation (O'Toole, 2000; Fullan, 2009; Weible et al., 2009) combining clear objectives and strong leadership from the Board with engagement of stakeholders at all levels, a more workable and universally understood homeworking policy may have been designed.

Consulting employees may have identified the limiting factors for some individuals, which were discovered in this research and meant they could not or would not participate in homeworking. For example, most non-homeworking participants had home environments

which they considered unsuitable for homeworking. In common with past studies a key constraint for some was the size of their home (Baruch, 2000; Yen, 2000), particularly for flat dwellers in London. Thus, the need for suitable space was found to be critical in deciding whether to undertake homeworking, in line with findings from Moos and Skaburskis (2008), although lack of space could have been used as an excuse to avoid homeworking. In this study, space constraints were a significant factor preventing homeworking. Participants mainly lived in London, many in small flats and studios which could not accommodate homeworking. As with the study by Gurstein (1996) who found space to be the most important criteria for homeworkers, restricted living space constituted a barrier to homeworking for participants in this study. This was particularly an issue for participants in very restricted accommodation such as bedsits, despite the policy expectation they were resistant to homeworking as being impractical from a space perspective. Those in restricted accommodation who were single described how even a small amount of homeworking would deprive them of the social interaction and camaraderie the office provided. This supports the findings of Woolliams and Trompenaars (2013) who reported similar comments from employees in cramped accommodation.

Another factor not considered when implementing the homeworking policy was the financial cost. Participants identified the cost of commuting and purchase of a season ticket as a barrier to homeworking. Also, the cost of utilities associated with homeworking, telephone and heating bills were highlighted as being affected with no method of reclaiming. Kurland and Bailey (1999) concluded for homeworkers to have a work environment adequate for their needs, employers should contribute financially. In this study there was no financial assistance available for bills or to purchase additional furniture or equipment. This is in common with findings by Nilles (2000), and Harris (2003) who found the imposed homeworking policy in the

drinks manufacturing company she studied to be under-resourced. However, other research has identified differences in terms of financial support. Tremblay, Paquet and Najem (2006) saw an increase in homeworkers receiving financial support between 1999 and 2002 and Johnson, Andrey and Shaw (2007) identified employers who funded additional telephone lines and some furniture. Telephone lines were particularly highlighted by participants in this study who believed the employer should provide some recompense in line with Robert and Borjesson (2006) whose research led them to conclude compensating homeworkers for the use of their facilities can benefit both employer and employee in incentivising homeworking. Recompensing or incentivising homeworkers was not considered to support homeworking in this study. It may have been thought unnecessary as homeworking was an expectation, or because employees had been homeworking on an ad hoc basis previously, and therefore cost was not judged to be an issue.

Family living arrangements, not just noise and disturbance, were identified as a constraint by some participants in common with Gurstein (1996). This study found the presence of other family members was a barrier in terms of balancing their needs with work. For example, participants reported relatives were reluctant for them to work from home fearing it would interfere with their daily routines. It was expressed by non-homeworkers as something they would find difficult to manage and were fearful of. This supports the findings of Towers et al. (2006) who suggested where employees perceived their family to be disapproving of them undertaking office-work at home, they were less likely to do so. Tietze and Musson (2005) investigated how relationships within the household were affected by homeworking and identified circumstances where households saw established relationships deteriorate after homeworking was introduced, a fear expressed by participants in this study. In other households Tietze and Musson (2005) noted homeworking was rejected because retaining the

division between home life and work life was important, a finding supported by non-homeworkers in this study who wanted to retain a clear division between work and home. Management of the boundaries and deliberate separation of work and home life so they do not affect one another, was reported by some participants and aligns with the findings of Kossek, Lautsch and Eaton (2006). For some employees, not just those in small properties, the desire to maintain a separation between work and home was so important that even introducing a policy expectation of homeworking was insufficient to make them change their working habits.

Participants reported several social factors, for example isolation, personality type and the ability to withstand the negative views of others, which dissuaded them from homeworking despite the expectation. Regarding personality type, some non-homeworkers felt they did not have the self-discipline to homework and preferred the routine of commuting to work and the familiar office environment. The importance of personality traits and job-related outcomes is recognised in studies by Judge, Heller & Mount (2002) and Kinsman (1987) who found that, in common with participants in this study, to be suited to homeworking individuals must be well organised, have a high degree of self-discipline and be happy working independently of others.

In common with findings from other studies of homeworking, participants were concerned about becoming isolated (Forester, 1989; Mokhtarian et al., 1998; Wilton, Páez & Scott, 2011). Despite the expectation being a minimum of one day per week, most non-homeworkers identified isolation as a barrier to them undertaking homeworking. Participants characterised isolation as not just missing out on socialising, but missing hearing what colleagues were talking about and what issues were important in the context of office politics (Gainey, Kelley & Hill, 1999). Professional isolation was examined by Cooper and Kurland (2002) who found

intra-organisational interpersonal networking activities including office gossip and spontaneous work-related discussions acted as informal learning opportunities. Homeworkers therefore felt 'out of the loop' and isolated, a concern of homeworkers in this study even though the amount of homeworking expected was low.

In common with research by Collins et al. (2016) participants in this study identified positive features of working in the office which were so important as to cause them to ignore the policy expectation. For example, participants highlighted the advantage of being able to have a quick chat in person with a colleague or see who was around to answer a question. Not having the ability to walk over to colleagues to ask questions and interact was recognised by Cooper and Kurland (2002) as being a key reason for feelings of isolation, a finding supported by this study where the ability to interact in the office overrode the expectation of homeworking for 1-2 days per week.

There appears to be several factors influencing employees when they decide whether to work from home. Factors can be divided into those related to the home environment and those relating to work, and both categories can have negative and positive effects depending on the circumstances of the individual and it is the balance of these which is interesting. The model below (Figure 1) shows how factors can push an employee away from the home environment towards the office or vice versa. For example, the office may not necessarily be particularly attractive but the push towards it comes from having an undesirable or inadequate home environment. Similarly, employees may not be pushed in a particular direction to escape negative factors from either the office or home but be pulled towards positive features of either environment. For example, the opportunity to fit in childcare activities may be such an advantage that it pulls employees away from a not unpleasant office environment.

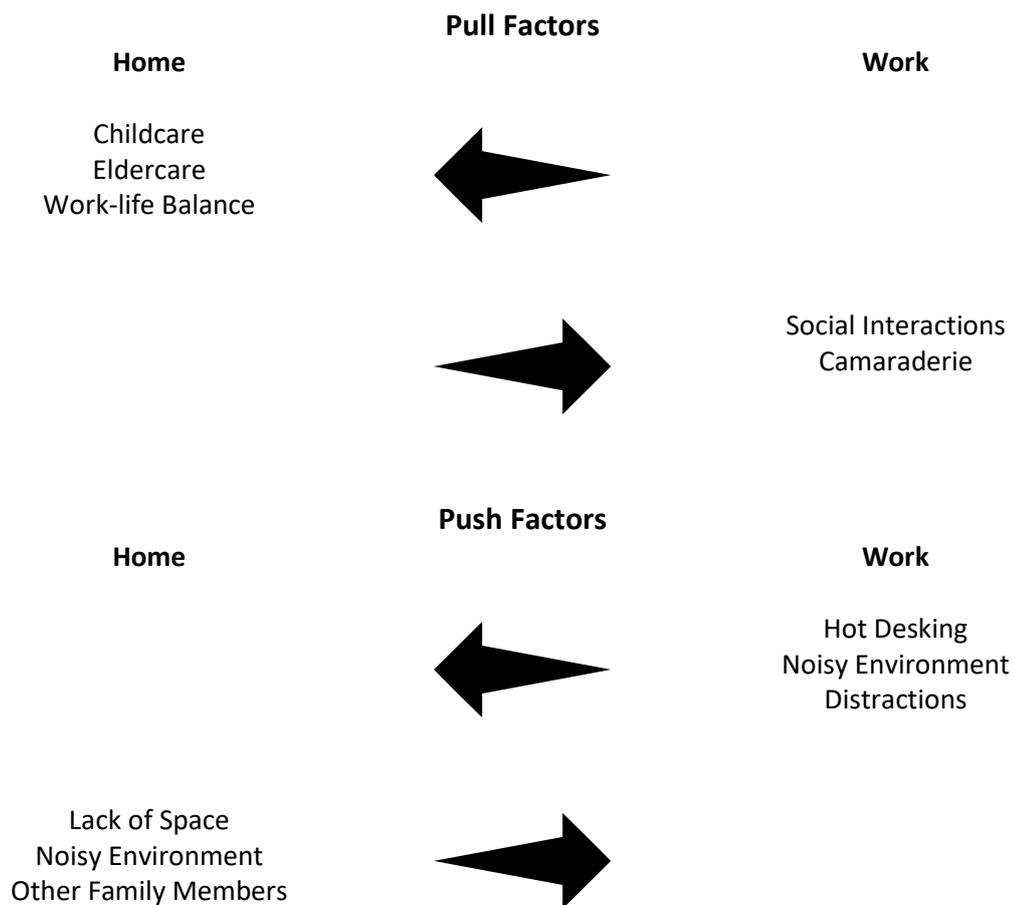


Fig.1. Model of Push and Pull Factors Affecting Employee Decisions on Homeworking

5.5 Trust and Consistency

Following on from how individuals personally implemented the policy either by homeworking or not, the research explored how employees perceived the embedding of the policy into the organisation. Buchanan et al., (2005) considers sustainability of change to be linked to the success of embedding change in the organisation, identifying managers as key to achieving success (Buchanan et al., 2007). Despite the clear expectation of homeworking, participants identified inconsistencies in policy implementation which they perceived as being unfair. Participants gave examples of managers refusing requests to work from home despite the

policy being in place. To achieve consistency in the implementation of policies, for example the availability of flexible working for all employees, Sweet and James (2013) suggest managers with a positive approach be supported, and sceptical managers be targeted with evidence of benefits. Unfairness may occur in organisations with discretionary homeworking arrangements. However, it would perhaps be less likely where a policy exists which expects homeworking. Results show managers did not apply the policy consistently as their personal views influenced how they implemented it. Nilsen (2015) observed that merging multiple theories of change implementation to ascertain drivers of success may mask contradictory assumptions about whether a culture can be overridden by personal beliefs. In this study, the aim of the change was for homeworking to become the cultural norm. However, the personal beliefs of some managers proved to be more influential than the policy expectation, causing inconsistency in implementation.

If the policy was applied consistently by managers, one could assume the psychological contract between the organisation and the employee is clear in terms of the offering and what is expected in return. However, in this study the organisation introduced a change that not everyone had been consulted on or agreed to. Rousseau (1995) defines the psychological contract as individual beliefs, shaped by the organisation and regarding the terms of an exchange agreement between the organisation and the individual. With the introduction of homeworking and the blurring of boundaries between work and home the traditional relationship between the individual and the organisation is challenged (Mirchandani, 2000) and the psychological contract between the individual and the organisation is less clear. This lack of clarity was recognised by Rousseau (1995) who identified that for flexible and homeworking, I-deals can emerge, I-deals being idiosyncratic, informal, voluntary arrangements personal to an individual, and therefore not necessarily fair in their application.

By introducing the homeworking policy there was an expectation everyone would undertake homeworking, removing the need to negotiate individual agreements as was previously the case. Therefore, the need to make idiosyncratic deals (I-deals) as identified by Rousseau (2005) would be redundant. The policy was such that homeworking was expected of everyone and no longer an individual perk available to the favoured few or senior staff. Findings show participants believed individual homeworking arrangements no longer needed to be negotiated, as it was unnecessary. However, some employees were prevented from accessing homeworking deals admissible under the policy, suggesting managers were exercising gatekeeping powers. Research by Collins et al. (2013) found managers may act as gatekeepers, denying homeworking opportunities to staff when homeworking is a perk negotiated on an individual basis. In contrast, this study found managers still acted as gatekeepers and denied access to homeworking arrangements despite it being an expectation of all staff.

With managers continuing to act as gatekeepers, non-homeworkers may have demonstrated animosity towards homeworkers for successfully negotiating personalised deals, resulting in the 'them and us' phenomenon of homeworkers and office-based workers identified by Tietze and Nadin (2011). A 'them and us' mentality was found to exist between non-homeworkers and homeworkers, not because of negotiated personal deals, but because of the additional workload for office staff, despite a policy expecting everyone to be homeworking.

There was also evidence of dissatisfaction because of the unfairness of some employees being allowed to homework and others not. Animosity was directed at managers who had responsibility for implementing the policy, with participants blaming them for failing to

discharge their responsibilities. The role of managers in implementing the policy and their approach to doing so is examined in more detail in the next section.

The research exposed relationship and trust issues between colleagues, specifically a suspicion from team members, both homeworkers and non-homeworkers, that some homeworkers were unproductive. A lack of understanding of the work being carried out by colleagues led to suspicion that for some roles homeworking may be unsuitable despite a policy expectation that it applied to all roles to some extent. Participants felt some colleagues did not have enough work to do at home, and questioned whether they were working as hard as they would in the office. Further research is needed to establish why colleagues were suspicious. Non-homeworkers with no experience of homeworking, may have a natural distrust of homeworkers, believing them to be distracted by other activities such as watching television. Similarly, homeworkers were suspicious of other homeworkers, possibly because they worked hard themselves to avoid distractions and believed others may be less successful, as indeed some non-homeworkers were as they recognised they lacked the self-discipline required to homework. Alternatively, homeworkers themselves succumbed to distractions and assumed others would.

In the office employees are not necessarily aware of what colleagues are working on and how industrious they are. Therefore, suspicion and lack of understanding may be due to the reliance on e-mail and telephone. Research on computer-mediated communication (CMC) demonstrated face-to-face contact as the most effective method for communication, because non-verbal cues are retained (Park, Rhoads, Hou, & Lee, 2014). Thus, working relationships enacted by electronic means are altered and contain fewer informational cues to allow both parties to interpret the interaction, leading to misunderstandings. For example, homeworkers

have flexibility to respond to requests when it suits them, free from office-based constraints. However, they were concerned about the impression it would give if they delayed responding. Similarly, non-homeworkers wondered what homeworkers were doing if they failed to respond quickly.

The quality of co-worker relationships for homeworkers is not just affected by the media used to communicate in terms of having fewer informational cues. The study found homeworkers disliked meetings via teleconferencing due to their inability to observe colleagues. During telephone calls subtle emotional signals and reactions are not as apparent, meaning it can be hard to distinguish feelings, for example confusing boredom with relaxation (Workman, Kahnweiler & Bommer, 2003). Consequently, co-worker relationships and trust may be adversely affected by homeworking because of the reliance on communicational exchanges, where it is hard for both parties to understand not just the messages being conveyed but information about emotions. Despite the organisation not providing guidance on teleconferences, one manager reported her team using them successfully with none of the issues identified by Workman et al. (2003).

There were instances of tensions and lack of trust between groups, for example suspicions that homeworkers did less work, homeworkers feeling guilty and stigmatised, and non-homeworkers feeling put upon. Notably tensions were more pronounced between co-workers. An explanation for the tensions and mild animosity between non-homeworkers and homeworkers may lie in Team Member Exchange theory (TMX). TMX is a measure of how an individual perceives his or her exchange relationship with a peer group (Seers, 1989), each team member defining his or her role in the team by the reinforcement of reciprocal actions (Jacobs, 1970). Golden (2006) suggests homeworking impacts negatively on the quality of

TMX, meaning co-workers relationships become adversely affected. There is a further negative effect as Seers (1989) links high quality TMX with overall job satisfaction. Therefore, homeworking may impact not just co-worker relationships but also levels of job satisfaction. This may explain the negative comments from participants about colleagues and the policy which, by changing the status of homeworking from a perk available to the few and extending it to all employees, should have been viewed more positively. Envy of the select few appears to have been replaced by suspicion and irritation. Where such trust is lacking amongst colleagues, managers may need to engage employees in trust-building activities and provide specific opportunities to develop shared personal experiences (Shaw, 1997).

5.6 Work intensification

We have already noted participants voiced suspicions that homeworkers may be indulging in activities other than working. This lack of trust was apparent to homeworkers who feared being stigmatised and not trusted to be as hard working as office-based colleagues. This resulted in them feeling it necessary to work harder or longer than office-based staff. Homeworkers also felt frequent checks by managers meant they were not trusted to be working. Consequently, they felt obliged to be immediately available, carrying the phone around the house and responding to e-mails quickly. In common with Hislop and Axtell's (2007) findings, office-based staff in this study were frustrated by not receiving immediate responses from homeworkers, and conversely homeworkers felt the need to always be available.

The motivation to work harder involves both intrinsic and external factors (Locke and Latham, 2004). Increases in the amount of effort workers expend on their jobs during the time they are

working is referred to as work intensification (Burchell, 2002). In their study of flexible working and work intensification, Kelliher and Anderson (2010) found evidence of enabled intensification, where remote workers reported working harder due to less distractions, avoiding distraction being the reason why some participants in this study worked from home. Kelliher and Anderson (2010) also identified self-imposed intensification of work, also reported by workers in this study. Although homeworking was expected, homeworkers felt it necessary to always be available to demonstrate they could be trusted to work. Fear of being thought of as underemployed or shirking by colleagues motivated them to be as hard working or more so than office-based colleagues (van Echtelt, Glebbeek & Lindenberg, 2006).

5.7 Impact on Managers' Decision-Making Power

The role of managers in implementing the homeworking policy is interesting given it was an expectation, and not subject to individual negotiation. Research by Batenburg and Peters (2005) suggests managers who supervise homeworkers need to know their employees will carry out their work effectively when they are 'out of sight'. Therefore, managers may be forgiven for being worried about losing control over their employees and their work. It could be argued that by making the policy an expectation, and absolving managers from decision making, they would not feel concerned. However, if managers are used to their authority being based on spatial proximity and being able to see employees (Wiesenfeld et al., 1999), the challenges of managing homeworkers remotely can be addressed through support and training (Staples, Hulland & Higgins, 1999). It is therefore unsurprising that managers in this study were cautious about managing homeworkers, as the policy was introduced without additional training for managers. Research by Peters and Heusinkveld (2010) found managers to be particularly unsupportive of homework when the organisation fails to provide adequate training to manage virtual teams, as was the case in this research.

Managers in this study were expected to implement the homeworking policy whilst losing control over working hours and patterns. The study found managers were concerned about employees being out of sight, in common with the findings of Peters et al. (2014). In their study into the introduction of new working practices, they found changing organisational culture to one where a higher level of trust is required takes time, and managers may be uncomfortable with new working practices such as homeworking.

Homeworking can reduce a manager's level of control as it removes the employee from the usual work environment and, as in this study, where everyone is expected to undertake some homeworking, may also remove the manager if they are homeworking. Managers may therefore ask, as Mokhtarian and Salomon (1996) did, if I cannot see my employees, how do I know they are working? For the managers in this study who were more relaxed about homeworking, the answer was to use output control strategies specifying what is to be accomplished and delivered, allowing decentralisation of work (Snell, 1992).

For some managers, the biggest adjustment was accepting the removal of their role as decision maker on homeworking requests. They felt their role had become redundant in terms of making decisions on homeworking, leaving them to cope with the consequences of dispersed teams, and struggling to schedule team meetings. The take-up of work-life policies within organisations can encounter barriers particularly in the form of actions by individual managers. For example, homeworking policies may be introduced but, as discovered, managers interpret them differently and act as gatekeepers of such programmes (Thompson, 2008; Collins et al., 2013), with reasons for rejecting requests including loss of control (Poelmans & Beham, 2008). In their study of the conceptualization of managers' work-life policy decisions, Poelmans and Beham (2008) argue where work-life policies are not

mandatory, all the organisational efforts of designing, developing and implementing policies converge into a single discretionary decision by the manager. However, with the introduction of a policy which expects homeworking from all employees, the manager should no longer be the single decision point identified by Poelmans and Beham (2008). The need to balance competing priorities and make complex decisions based on multiple criteria (Powell & Greenhaus, 2010) is removed by the expectation of homeworking. This may explain why managers in this study recognised their role had changed and their power had diminished, and the removal of the complex decision making around homeworking requests ostensibly making life simpler.

For employees, the removal of decision making from line managers was less clear cut and brought with it concerns about fairness. Despite the homeworking policy, there emerged evidence of managers still acting as gatekeepers as described by Collins et al. (2013), leading to unjust outcomes for individuals and between individuals, prompting concerns about fairness across the organisation, with managers blamed for the inconsistency. Although a gap in the literature around organisations with expectations of homeworking, the restriction of homeworking by managers in this study supports Nadeem and Hendry (2003) who found managers exercising the same restrictions despite formal homeworking policies and guidance. Exercising power by refusing homeworking requests where homeworking is expected, suggests some managers may be reluctant to relinquish power and potentially increase the ambiguities around their status and authority as identified by Felstead et al. (2003). Continuing to refuse requests not only allows managers to act as gatekeepers exerting their authority over employees (Collins et al., 2013) but in this study, it also emphasises their confidence and authority by disregarding organisational edicts.

Employees seek to evaluate the fairness of decisions made by managers in terms of four factors - information provided, decision process, decision outcome and concern of the manager for the individual (Colquitt, 2001). Participants gave examples of managers refusing homeworking requests from individuals with medical issues or caring responsibilities despite the policy expectation. This appears to demonstrate a lack of concern for the individual, as suggested by Colquitt (2001). The lack of a decision process was a concern for some participants who suggested the organisation should be clearer about how decisions are made and provide basic rules, guidelines and a decision-making process. Participants acknowledged that even with a policy expectation of homeworking, decisions were still needed on patterns of homeworking and number of days. However, the concerns about fairness suggest a clearer decision process, information about decision making criteria, and a genuine concern from all managers for individuals may be required (Colquitt, 2001). As Lai et al. (2009) point out, when employees have different degrees of flexibility, comparisons are made with colleagues and fairness is questioned.

The results of this study show the feeling of entitlement was not restricted to the request for homeworking but also the pattern of homeworking. Managers reported some homeworkers wanting a pattern of homeworking which suited them regardless of the needs of the team. Others refused to come into the office on their usual homeworking day even if business need required it. A sense of entitlement is an important part of the employee-organisation relationship and where, for whatever reason, employees exhibit a high degree of entitlement this becomes a challenge for managers (Fisk, 2010). For example, moving from homeworking as an ad hoc arrangement to it becoming organisational policy can allow employees with entitlement beliefs to seek to maximise their personal outcomes by, for example, insisting on specific homeworking days. Tomlinson (2013) found because individuals respond to the world

as they perceive it, managers should clarify the basis on which sought after outcomes, such as homeworking, will be distributed. Although the organisation in this study communicated the policy, they did not seek feedback from employees on how the messaging around homeworking was understood. Tomlinson (2013) went on to suggest because employees have individual prejudices and biases, any communications should be 'reality checked' by assessing whether employees have interpreted and understood information correctly. The organisation in this study may have found it helpful to check employees understood the entitlement was to homeworking not specific days or working patterns. Fisk (2010) observes that many HR practitioners have reported a workforce increasingly exhibiting expectation of entitlement to job flexibility and duties. In this study the policy enshrines homeworking as a right but also portrays it as being beneficial for employees, which is not necessarily the case for everyone as the study shows. Those who find it beneficial may be in danger of taking homeworking for granted over time, with employees believing they deserve more for doing less, as recognised by Fisk (2010).

5.8 Impact on Career

A key finding from this study was that despite the organisational expectation, almost all participants believed homeworking may adversely affect career progression. This supports the findings of McCloskey and Igbaria (2003) and Maruyama and Tietze (2012) who found a major concern of homeworkers was career development. They suggested employers should pay attention to ensuring employees did not see their chances of promotion being adversely affected when designing homeworking policies. Participants felt the performance management system was unfair to homeworkers, disadvantaging them both in terms of in-year recognition and identification of potential to progress, because it relied on feedback from colleagues, not just the manager. Igbaria and Baroudi (1995) recognised the importance of a

fair performance management mechanism in addressing the disadvantages homeworkers may suffer when performance evaluations form part of the assessment of promotion prospects. In their study of Best Buy Co., Inc and its results based initiative, Kelly et al. (2011) found all employees, regardless of their working pattern or location, were included with none being penalised in annual performance evaluations.

Participants who believed homeworking could impact negatively on their career prospects recognised the importance of communications and feedback from other colleagues, not just their manager. The research found e-mail and telephone were well used for communication between office-based colleagues and homeworkers. However honest and open exchange is difficult to achieve using such methods, and their use can impact on the effectiveness and frequency of informal mentoring, coaching and detailed feedback on performance (Cooper & Kurland, 2002), which was a concern raised by participants.

The ability to pick up information in the workplace or being 'in the know' was also recognised by participants as being important for career progression. Working at home for 1-2 days per week, participants felt excluded from the informal networking which Chiaburu and Harrison (2008) identified as occurring in the office. However, in this study it was the feedback required for end year reviews which concerned participants the most. This supports the findings of Kurland and Pelled (2000) who found ad hoc discussions, and participating in and sharing office related gossip which employees could use to their advantage, allowed employees to build relationships with peers and superiors who may provide feedback at annual reviews.

Missing out on informal communications and information in the workplace, development activities and opportunities to network and influence those who may have input into one's career, were viewed as drawbacks for homeworkers. However, the factor homeworkers felt impacted most on career prospects was the concept of being 'out of sight, out of mind' and forgotten about when opportunities arose. This supports the work of Cooper and Kurland (2002) who found in their work on isolation, having the ability to pick up additional information shared only in the office can aid career development. Homeworkers can also feel invisible and fear missing out on quality projects or credit being given to visible colleagues if they are not in the office regularly (Cooper & Kurland, 2002). In believing homeworking to have a negative impact on career progression, the findings from this study of public sector employees contradict Cooper and Kurland (2002). In examining professional isolation, they concluded homeworking was less likely to impact negatively on the career of public sector employees because of the structured approach to selection and promotion in the public sector. However, this ignores the importance of networking and making a visible impact which participants highlighted as being important for career progression. Whether the impact is greater in the private or public sector is an area for future research.

Participants in this study felt the optimum amount of homeworking was a maximum of two days a week, in line with Golden (2006) who suggested managers should consider limiting homeworking by employees to two days per week to avoid employees becoming invisible. Despite the expectation only being 1-2 days per week, participants mentioned missing out on social interactions in the office as a drawback to homeworking, together with professional isolation due to not being visible and available for specific opportunities. Interestingly in their research, Cooper and Kurland (2002) found informal communications such as the grapevine were less important in public organisations than the private sector because bureaucratic

cultures controlled who was promoted or selected for developmental opportunities. This finding is not borne out by this research where interpersonal skills and networking were perceived to be important, features Cooper and Kurland (2002) attributed more to private organisations. The importance of maintaining contact with the workplace, for example via electronic means or phone calls, was highlighted by homeworkers as important in avoiding feelings of isolation. This is in line with the findings of Golden (2006) who in examining professional isolation found homeworkers better at maintaining the relationship with their manager than with colleagues. He suggested managers take responsibility for providing opportunities for co-workers to interact to counter professional isolation and reduce the likelihood of homeworkers being forgotten when assignments and career opportunities became available. Managers in this study recognised the importance of team interaction, but not in respect of ensuring homeworkers were not overlooked for opportunities.

Although there is a significant amount of research concerned with the negative impacts of homeworking on career progression, where those who are visible are promoted (Heatherman & O'Rourke, 2014), not all participants thought it had a negative effect. Leslie, Manchester, Park, and Mehng (2012) found homeworking can aid career progression when managers attribute its use to a wish to increase productivity as opposed to being for personal life reasons. McCloskey and Igbaria (2003) also found no adverse impact of homeworking on career progression amongst a study of professionals. They did however recognise the organisation in question was committed to making a success of homeworking, with the initiative supported at the highest levels and training provided for employees and managers. There was no training on offer in the organisation where this research was conducted and in terms of senior support, participants found managerial support across the organisation to be variable with some senior managers openly critical of the policy.

Having considered the findings in the context of the literature, the next section concludes the research by assessing the implications for policy and practice, and reflecting on the research and its limitations.

6. Conclusion

The growing move towards increased homeworking as a method of reducing cost and the introduction of an expectation of homeworking was the background to this research. This study has shown that despite the requirement for change being an expectation from senior management and launched as an organisational change programme, the desired outcome of all employees undertaking homeworking was not achieved. Changing the culture of an organisation is time consuming and is often met with resistance from managers and employees. In this study, the key element of the change was an expectation of homeworking, but the organisation failed to follow through with continued communication and monitoring. Consequently, the change was met with non-compliance. Moving to a culture where homeworking is universally accepted and implemented may be unachievable unless key issues highlighted by this study are addressed.

6.1 Summary of Main Findings for Research

Qualitative research methods are by nature more fluid than quantitative research methods, and allow for discovering unanticipated findings. Such fluidity allowed this research to uncover not only employees' views about the homeworking expectation, but also unearthed information about how the policy was communicated initially but not embedded as an organisational change. Despite the work done within the organisation to communicate details of the change and the underlying rationale, the messages were confusing and interpreted in different ways by employees. The lack of preparation to understand the culture and political climate of the organisation before launching the change was evident. The case study demonstrates when implementing an organisational change that impacts on employees' personal lives, communications should be tailored to the complex combinations of

interpersonal, organisational and personal factors which employees weigh up when making decisions.

In terms of further research, it would be interesting to revisit the organisation to establish if attitudes had changed and the policy implementation was more consistent. Anecdotal evidence from ex-colleagues suggests this is not the case, as employee numbers have risen the pressure on desks has increased because significant numbers of employees are not undertaking any homeworking despite the policy remaining in place. As an HR professional I know at least one government organisation has introduced mandatory homeworking through a negotiated change in employment contracts rather than a policy change without a legal foundation. Research on mandated homeworking in such an organisation would be interesting as the waters may be less muddied by issues of poor communication, ambiguity and inconsistency.

The ability of managers to trust employees working remotely was identified as a barrier to the adoption of homeworking. However, this study found managers, although concerned about potential loss of control, were relieved the decision was taken out of their hands by the policy expectation. There was a willingness to focus on management by results regardless of the location of the employee. The study found trust of individuals to be working whilst at home was more of an issue for co-workers. By expecting homeworking, the opportunity was open to all, arousing suspicions that colleagues would take advantage and begin homeworking but fail to carry out their duties whilst at home. There is an opportunity for further study to examine in detail the issue of trust between co-workers when homeworking is an expectation.

Impact on career progression is also an area where further study could assess whether the concerns raised by participants are justified. A longer-term research project into career progression by homeworkers and non-homeworkers would need careful design due to the variety of factors, beyond work location, which may influence progression.

6.2 Summary of Main Findings for Policy and Practice

There are several areas where this study has identified issues related to policy and practice. The most obvious is the introduction of an expectation of homeworking via a change in policy but not employment contracts. The organisation assumed as homeworking was being undertaken by some individuals, often senior, it was viewed as a perk, and therefore introducing a change making it not just available to, but expected of, all would be welcomed. This assumption did not take account of the variety of personal circumstances and preferences within the organisation. Imposition of rules enshrined in a policy did not result in consistent implementation. Instead the operation of homeworking remained based on general understandings and patterns of action arrived at by negotiation between individuals.

To achieve consistency across the organisation, the requirement for homeworking could be negotiated into employment contracts. However, it is unlikely the Trade Unions would agree because, as this study has demonstrated, not everyone wants to or can work from home. An alternative approach being trialled in some Government organisations is the introduction of three employment contracts, office-based, home-based and a hybrid allowing home and office working. The arrangements are contractual but employees can choose the contract which suits them best.

This study identified the role of managers as an area where information was lacking and there was certainly an appetite for training in the management of virtual teams. The guidance available was limited and did not cover the practicalities of managing virtual teams in any depth. In terms of process, the picture was confused as to whether individuals had to apply to work from home. The policy suggested not, yet some managers were receiving requests. A clear process would help managers consider the patterns of homeworking across their team when individuals are planning homeworking days. Similarly, employees with unsupportive managers would benefit from a process allowing them to formally register their request to work from home and have it properly assessed.

In terms of career progression, the performance management system was identified as potentially favouring office-based employees, and may need to be examined by the organisation to assess whether this is the case.

One could argue however that despite the lack of consistency in application and the differing attitudes of staff and managers, the change process employed in the organisation achieved its objective in that sufficient numbers of staff opted to work from home to relieve the pressure on accommodation.

6.3 Limitations of the Research

As homeworking was an expectation under the policy and not a mandatory requirement across the organisation, the study had to consider the areas of organisational change and communications, rather than focussing purely on the homeworking aspects. The study was

also limited as there was no opportunity to conduct follow up interviews when the policy change had been in place for an extended length of time.

6.4 Reflections as a Researcher

On embarking upon this study within my own organisation I expected to encounter some reluctance from employees to participate in the research. My own role in the organisation as a senior HR manager meant I was closely associated with the homeworking policy despite the project being designed and implemented by the Organisational Change Team. On advertising the opportunities, I was surprised at the number of volunteers for both the focus groups and interviews. I was prepared for participants to be reluctant to talk in any depth about their views to someone so closely connected to the organisation. What I was not prepared for was the extent to which colleagues were willing to talk and engage with the research.

The most surprising feature of the research was the extent to which I had failed to appreciate how irregular implementation of the new policy had been. From my position in HR, a team which had naturally led by example, I wrongly assumed I would be interviewing employees about their feelings on its implementation. Instead I was hearing how it had not been implemented, the inconsistencies and, from the perspective of a senior HR manager, worrying stories of the unfairness and potential discrimination around it. I had not anticipated that from the research, themes would emerge connected with the implementation of the organisational change, particularly communications. I feel my approach during the analysis of manually manipulating the data to see the patterns and themes emerge rather than using CADQAS software allowed these issues to surface.

Finally, this research was into an expectation of homeworking in a central government organisation, using a qualitative approach. It is now apparent that expectation can be interpreted differently when not supported by contractual change and as such not everyone embraced homeworking. Whether the organisation should be concerned about this depends on whether it judges the policy to have achieved its objectives in reducing office space, whether the unfairness impacts on employees' engagement, and whether it still seeks to achieve a culture shift to one where homeworking is the norm.

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Policy Extracts

Homeworking Requirement

As part of the Working Differently initiative which encompasses the provision of technology, reduction in the estate and the policy of homeworking we expect you to work **one and up to two days a week** (approximately 40% of your working hours) remotely from home. Your working arrangement should be decided as part of ongoing discussions between you and your line manager and, where appropriate, your wider directorate. As part of this you need to actively consider how you can work from home instead of your core London office.

There will only be a limited number of desks in our London estate allocated to staff. Teams will need to work together to work within this reduced desk ratio.

Interaction with Sick Absence Policy

You have a responsibility to make a sensible judgement about whether you are well enough to work or not.

If you are too sick to make the journey into the office but well enough to work at home, you may do this with the agreement of your manager, as you would with any instance where you need to work at home at short notice.

If you are too sick to work, whether at home or in the office, you should take sickness absence. If you choose to log on for a few hours that is your own choice and will not affect the fact that the day has been taken as sick leave

Managers should not put pressure on staff to work when sick, whether this is to come into the office or log on, for however short a period, if they are at home.

Working Differently – Message to Staff

I wanted to let you know that we decided in Executive Committee this week to roll out the Working Differently approach. I also wanted to let you know why, what it will mean for you and what will happen next.

First, why are we doing it?

We see this as an opportunity to build on the flexible ways of working that were so successful over the Olympic period, supported by better IT and an improved office layout. Also, accommodation is under pressure as we build up our specialist teams. This programme can provide a better working environment for everyone, while saving significant costs on accommodation. There are around 300 unused desks in the main building on any one day but we cannot fit more people into the office with the current layout and kit. It costs around £10,000 per person per year to find accommodation elsewhere in London.

While many of you are very positive about the planned changes, there are also colleagues who are apprehensive, or even hostile. We understand that, because this will affect all of us every working day. We had to be sure that it would work and meet your needs. That is why we piloted the new approach in four areas. What we have found, I believe, confirms it is right to go ahead.

One of the real successes of the pilots has been the IT improvements: faster login times, wide screens and better printers have all been welcomed. Reducing the number of desks has allowed us to increase the number of informal workspaces, making it easier for people to get together and reducing pressure on meeting rooms.

But the real learning (being honest, we didn't get it quite right at first) was the importance of involving the people concerned right from the beginning, so that they determined how they

used their space and how it could work for them. This basic principle will underpin the roll-out.

What will it mean for you?

We'll roll out the new model progressively across the organisation so you can all benefit from more space, better IT and a better environment. Your managers will work with you to plan how to use this as an opportunity to work more flexibly in a way that meets your needs and those of the Department. We'll offer a core layout, based on our experience from the pilots. But this is **not** a one size fits all. You will have the opportunity to ensure that what happens in your area meets your needs. Focal points from the pilots have agreed to lend their experience.

What will happen next?

We'll set out a timetable in the next few weeks, and we'll update and expand the information on the intranet. This will include a mailbox for your comments, suggestions and questions.

I recognise that while this is good news for many of you, it is not welcomed by all. I suggest that you begin talking in your teams about how to make it work. And if you have any specific questions please contact the team via the dedicated mailbox.

This is positive step for us and we know from the pilots the benefits that the approach can bring. I will also be taking the opportunity to work in the pilot areas and experience the new layout for myself over the next few weeks. I'm convinced that these changes will help build a better organisation and I urge each of you to help make it work.

December 2012

Communications Plan

Method	Detail
Plasma screens and lift lobby panels	Include one screen per day amongst news items.
Staff Magazine	Overview of the policy plus mixture of interviews, examples and 'vox pops' (opinion pieces by employees).
Intranet	Include key Senior Management messages on ambition. Publicise in other media updates if new material added to Intranet.
Management Cascade	Regular items using slide packs to demonstrate the need for changed behaviours and examples.
Webchats with Senior Managers	Possible if Senior Managers are willing.
Line Manager Policy Guidance	Publish on Intranet and highlight in weekly bulletin

**VIRTUAL
LEADERSHIP
PRESENTATION**

A virtual team (also known as a geographically dispersed team, distributed team, or remote team) is a group of individuals who work across time, space and organizational boundaries with links strengthened by webs of *communication technology*.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/virtual_team

Summary of key principles I've learnt:

1. **Managing virtual teams:** by results-setting, clear expectations and goals, building ownership and then managing performance
2. **Engage virtual teams:** building commitment through understanding what motivates them and by building trust
3. **Communicating with virtual teams:** ensuring they have the same level of inclusion and involvement as your co-located workers.

What Hindered Me

- Technology or lack of it
- Culture and suspicion
- Performance of staff

Concerns About Managing Remote Teams

1. What is my role as a virtual team leader?
2. How do I maintain team identity and performance?
3. How much autonomy/control do I give to others?
4. How do I maintain engagement?
5. How do I effectively communicate with the team?
6. How do I use the different technologies that are available to me?

Working from Home

Busting the Myths

You're not really working?

You have to be in the room to brief the Senior Managers?

You can't really speak to a Senior Manager on the 'phone?

You need to be in the office so people can see you?

Remote Teams

Consider the following statements:

1. *“Leading a remote team is no different from managing an office-based team face to face – it’s all about being a good manager.”*
2. *“Remote teams and face to face teams are like apples and oranges – and leaders who recognise this fact are the ones whose team will succeed”*

Conduct a short discussion (5 minutes to agree response). Which statement do you most agree with most and why?

How We Work

- A culture of helping each other
- Collaborating and Partnering
- Build engagement with team motivation sessions
- Use TED talks as a focus for the sessions
- <https://www.ted.com/talks>
- Conversation and support

Why do Virtual Teams Fail?

- Lack of clear goals, direction or priorities
- Lack of clear roles amongst team members
- Lack of co-operation and trust
- Lack of engagement

Virtual Team Success: A practical guide for working and leading from a distance.

(Darleen M. DeRosa; Richard Lepsinger. Publisher: Pfeiffer. Pub. 2010)

10 Things I've Considered as a Virtual Leader

- Co-ordination rather than control
- Accessibility rather than omnipresence
- Information without overload
- Feedback instead of advice
- Fairness over favouritism
- Decisiveness not intrusive supervision
- Honesty, not manipulation
- Concern for development, not apathy about it
- Community building over 'co-ordinated isolation'
- Respect rather than paternalism or condescension

Key Legislative and Policy Changes or Initiatives Concerning Flexible Working Since 1996

Year	Legislation or Policy Change	Purpose
1996	European Directive on Parental Leave (96/34/EC)	In June 1996, the Council adopted a Directive (96/34/EC) requiring Member States to put the framework agreement on parental leave into effect.
1997	European Directive on Parental Leave Extension to UK (97/75/EC)	The Labour Government agreed to implement the EU Parental Leave Directive so on 15 December the Council of Ministers approved an extension Directive to apply the provisions to the UK.
1998	Working Time Regulations (SI 1998/1833)	Set out the maximum length of the working week plus conferred the right to annual leave and minimum weekly rest periods.

1998	National Child Care Strategy (DfEE, 1998)	A Department for Education and Employment framework and consultation document on childcare provision in Britain.
1999	National Strategy for Carers (DoH, 1999)	A Department of Health framework and consultation document on the provisions for the needs of people caring for older citizens in Britain.
1999	Employment Relations Act – Parental Leave Directive (SI 3312) (DTI, 1999)	This Act enacted the EU Directive (97/75/EC) and was significant in that it conferred upon parents the right to take 13 weeks unpaid leave before a child's 5 th birthday for children born after 15 December 1999.
1999	Employment Relations Act – Time off for Dependents SI 3312) (DTI, 1999)	The Act also gave working parents the right to take time off to deal with unexpected emergencies involving people they cared for.

2000	Part-time Work Directive (2000)	Came into force in July and ensured that part time workers received treatment no less favourable than full time workers in matters of pay, holidays, parental leave etc.
2000	Work-life balance: Changing patterns in a changing world (DfEE, 2000)	An initiative launched by DfEE which included the Work-life Balance Challenge Fund which encouraged employers to introduce or widen their flexible working provision.
2000	Work and parents: Competitiveness and choice (DTI, 2000)	A Green Paper Green Paper which sought views on proposed practical measures to help working parents and businesses.
2001	DTI Press Release extending provisions of Employment Relations Act (DTI, 2001a)	On 25th April, the right to 13 weeks unpaid leave was extended to 18 weeks for parents of disabled children and the 13 weeks became applicable to all children

		under 5 on 15 December 1999.
2001	DTI announces the Work and Parents Taskforce (DTI, 2001b)	A DTI initiative to consider light touch legislation giving employees the right to request flexible working arrangements.
2002	Employment Act (2002)	Parents of young and disabled children have right to apply to work flexibly.
2006	Flexible Working Regulations (2006)	Right to apply extended to those who care for adults.
2010	Parental Leave Directive (2010/18/EU)	A new Framework Agreement on parental leave extended the period of parental leave to four months for each parent to help employees reconcile their professional and parental responsibilities.
2011	Consultation on Modern Workplaces (BIS, 2011)	A consultation on proposals to introduce more flexible and family-friendly working practices in the UK.

2013	Implementation of the Parental Leave Directive (2010/18/EU),	From March, unpaid parental leave increased from 13 to 18 weeks to comply with the 2010 Parental Leave Directive.
2014	Children and Families Act (2014)	Government extends the right to request flexible working to all employees.

Source: Adapted from Dex, S., and Smith, C. (2002). *The nature and pattern of family-friendly employment policies in Britain*. Bristol: Policy Press.

Review of Literature - Record of Database Searches

Initial Search				
Criteria	Peer Reviewed Articles			
Database	OneSearch (Lancaster University) Includes All Databases			
Search ID#	Search Terms	Search Options	Last Run Via	Results
S3	(DE "HOME offices" OR DE "HOME labor" OR DE "TELECOMMUTING" OR DE "WORK & family") AND trust	Limiters - Published Date: 20040101- 201641231 Search modes - Find all my search terms	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - Business Source Premier	51
S2	DE "HOME offices" OR DE "HOME labor" OR DE "TELECOMMUTING" OR DE "WORK & family"	Limiters - Published Date: 20040101- 20161231 Search modes - Find all my search terms	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search	3,975

			Database - Business Source Premier	
S1	DE "HOME offices" OR DE "HOME labor" OR DE "TELECOMMUTING" OR DE "WORK & family"	Search modes - Find all my search terms	Interface - EBSCOhost Research Databases Search Screen - Advanced Search Database - Business Source Premier	7,312

Search Terms	(teleworking OR telecommuting) AND “organisational change”			
Criteria	Peer Reviewed Journal Articles			
Databases	Scopus	PsycInfo	Web of Science	Emerald
All Results	13	1	1	43
Post 2000	10	1	1	34
Journal Articles	9	1	1	33
Exclude Property Articles	8	1	1	9

Search Terms	(teleworking OR telecommuting) AND “organizational change”			
Criteria	Peer Reviewed Journal Articles			
Databases	Scopus	PsycInfo	Web of Science	Emerald
All Results	13	14	3	43
Post 2000	10	10	2	34
Journal Articles	9	8	2	33
Exclude Property Articles	8	8	2	9

Search Terms	Organisational Change (37,819) + Communication (793,734) + Management (2,006,134)
Criteria	Peer Reviewed Journal Articles
Database	Web of Science
All Results	1163
Management & Business	428
Post 2000	376
Exclude Articles Not Directly Related to Communications	21

Luecke's Seven Steps for Successful Change Programmes Model

Steps	Actions
Step 1	Mobilise energy and commitment through joint identification of business problems and their solutions.
Step 2	Develop a shared vision of how to organise and manage for competitiveness.
Step 3	Identify the leadership.
Step 4	Focus on results, not on activities.
Step 5	Start change at the periphery, then let it spread to other units without pushing it from the top.
Step 6	Institutionalise success through formal policies, systems, and structures.
Step 7	Monitor and adjust strategies in response to problems in the change process.

Source: Adapted from Luecke, R. (2003). *Managing change and transition* (Vol. 3). Boston,

MA: Harvard Business School Press.

Phenomenological Paradigms

	Phenomenological Paradigm
Basic beliefs:	<p>The world is socially constructed and subjective.</p> <p>Observer is part of what is observed. In my research, I recognise I will inevitably influence the outcome of the interviews.</p> <p>Science is driven by human interests.</p>
Researcher should:	<p>Focus on meanings. I am trying to explore what is happening and how people are feeling with a view to understanding.</p> <p>Try to understand what is happening.</p> <p>Look at the totality of each situation.</p> <p>I will be developing ideas through induction from data.</p> <p>I am not starting with a hypothesis but using induction.</p>
Proposed methods for this proposal:	<p>Use multiple methods, document review, focus groups and interviews to explore thoroughly the phenomena under investigation.</p> <p>Use focus groups as a developmental phase to firm up questions for interview.</p> <p>Collection of qualitative data from interviews.</p>

Source: Adapted from Easterby-Smith, M., Thorpe, R., and Lowe, A. (2002). *Management Research: An Introduction*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

**Staff Bulletin Notice****Opportunity to participate in research into homeworking**

I am looking for volunteers to participate in three focus groups looking at identifying the key issues around homeworking. If you are a homeworker, a non-homeworker or the manager of one or more homeworkers and would be interested in taking part please contact me for further information on the research. All information gathered as part of the research will be confidential and will not be shared with participants' line managers, colleagues or anyone else within the Department. Participation will be entirely voluntary on the part of individual employees, no one is under any obligation to participate and choosing not to take part will have no impact whatsoever on any employees' working situation now or in the future.

Further information

If you would like more information on participating please contact Judith Marshall-Camm on x8126 or via the confidential e-mail address below:

judith.marshall-camm@lancaster.ac.uk

Characteristics of Participants - Focus Groups

Homeworkers Focus Group	Male	Female	Carer	Management Grade	Homeworking Pattern per week
Participant 1		X	X		Ad Hoc
Participant 2	X		X	X	1 Day
Participant 3	X				Ad Hoc
Participant 4		X	X		1 Day
Participant 5		X		X	1 Day
Participant 6		X	X		2 Days
Total	2	4	4	2	-
Non- Homeworkers Focus Group	Male	Female	Carer	Management Grade	Homeworking Pattern per Week
Participant 1	X				N/A
Participant 2	X			X	N/A
Participant 3		X	X		N/A
Participant 4		X		X	N/A
Participant 5	X				N/A
Participant 6	X				N/A
Total	4	2	1	2	-
Managers Focus Group	Male	Female	Carer	Management Grade	Homeworking Pattern per Week
Participant 1	X		X	X	None

Participant 2	X			X	1 Day
Participant 3		X	X	X	None
Participant 4	X			X	None
Participant 5		X	X	X	None
Participant 6		X	X	X	1Day
Total	3	3	4	6	-

Characteristics of Interviewees

Homeworkers	Male	Female	Carer	Management Grade*	Homeworking Pattern per Week
HW1		X	X	X	1 Day
HW2		X	X		Ad Hoc
HW3	X		X	X	1 Day
HW4		X	X	X	2 Days
HW5	X				Ad Hoc
HW6		X			1 Day
HW7		X	X	X	1 Day
HW8	X				1 Day
HW9	X		X	X	2 Days
Total	4	5	6	5	-
Non- Homeworkers	Male	Female	Carer	Management Grade*	Homeworking Pattern per Week
NHW1		X			N/A
NHW2	X				N/A
NHW3	X				N/A
NHW4		X			N/A
NHW5		X	X	X	N/A
NHW6	X			X	N/A
NHW7		X			N/A

NHW8		X		X	N/A
NHW9		X		X	N/A
Total	3	6	1	4	-
Managers	Male	Female	Carer	Management Grade	Homeworking Pattern per Week
MGR1		X		X	None
MGR2	X		X	X	1 Day
MGR3	X		X	X	None
MGR4		X		X	2 Days
MGR5	X			X	None
MGR6		X	X	X	1 Day
Total	3	3	3	6	-

* Management Grade reflects all Civil Service grades above administrative level. However not everyone in these grades manages staff. Only participants described as Managers were asked about managing homeworkers

Key

HW – Homeworker

NHW – Non-Homeworker

MGR – Manager

Faculty of Health and Medicine Research Ethics Committee (FHMREC)
Lancaster University

Application for Ethical Approval for Research

Instructions

1. Apply to the committee by submitting
 - ✓ The University's Stage 1 Self-Assessment Form (standard form or student form) **and** the Project Information & Ethics questionnaire. These are available on the Research Support Office website: [LU Ethics](#)
 - ✓ The completed FHMREC application form
 - ✓ Your full research proposal (background, literature review, methodology/methods, ethical considerations)
 - ✓ All accompanying research materials such as, but not limited to,
 - 1) Advertising materials (posters, e-mails)
 - 2) Letters of invitation to participate
 - 3) Participant information sheets
 - 4) Consent forms
 - 5) Questionnaires, surveys, demographic sheets
 - 6) Interview schedules, interview question guides, focus group scripts
 - 7) Debriefing sheets, resource lists
2. Submit all the materials electronically as a **SINGLE** email attachment in PDF format. Instructions for creating such a document are available on the FHMREC website (<http://www.lancs.ac.uk/shm/research/ethics/>).
3. Submit one **collated** and **signed** paper copy of the full application materials. If the applicant is a student, the paper copy of the application form must be signed by the Academic Supervisor.
4. Committee meeting dates and application submission dates are listed on the research ethics committee website <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/shm/research/ethics/>. Applications must be submitted by the deadline stated on the website, to:

Diane Hopkins
Faculty of Health & Medicine
B03, Furness College
Lancaster University,
LA1 4YG
d.hopkins@lancaster.ac.uk

5. Attend the committee meeting on the day that the application is considered.

1. Title of Project:

An Investigation into the Impact of an Organisationally Driven Home Working Initiative on Employees and Managers

2. If this is a student project, please indicate what type of project by ticking the relevant box:

PG Diploma
 Masters dissertation
 MRes
 MSc
 DCLinPsy SRP

PhD Thesis
 XPhD Pall. Care/Pub. Hlth/Org. Hlth & Well Being
 MD
 DCLinPsy Thesis

Special Study Module (3rd year medical student)

3. Type of study X Involves direct involvement by human subjects

Involves existing documents/data only. Contact the Chair of FHMREC before continuing.

Applicant information

4. Name of applicant/researcher: Judith Marshall-Camm

5. Appointment/position held by applicant and Division within FHM 3rd Year Student

6. Contact information for applicant:

E-mail: Judith.Marshall-Camm@dft.gsi.gov.uk Telephone: 0207 944 8126 _____

Address: _____

7. Project supervisor(s), if different from applicant:

Name(s): Dr Alison Collins, Dr Sabir Giga

E-mail(s): a.m.collins@lancaster.ac.uk s.giga@lancaster.ac.uk

8. Appointment held by supervisor(s) and institution(s) where based (if applicable):

Dr. Alison Collins Lecturer within the Centre for Organisational Health and Well Being at
Lancaster University School of Health and Medicine

Dr. Sabir Giga Senior Lecturer, Division of Health Research at Lancaster University
School of Health and Medicine

9. Names and appointments of all members of the research team (including degree where applicable)

Judith Marshall-Camm PhD Organisational Health and Wellbeing

The Project

NOTE: In addition to completing this form you must submit a detailed research protocol and all supporting materials.

10. Summary of research protocol in lay terms (maximum length 150 words).

In 2012 an initiative was introduced in a UK Government Department where I work to reduce journeys during the 2012 Olympics and provide a legacy for how work was done in the future. It was seen as an opportunity to change employees' behaviour and increase homeworking permanently providing benefits of flexibility and potential future reduction in estate costs.

This research, which will take place in the Government Department mentioned above, aims to contribute to the theory on homeworking and the impact on employees. It will commence with a developmental phase of focus groups to identify overarching issues which employees raise in relation to the homeworking initiative.

The issues raised will feed into a next phase consisting of semi-structured interviews with managers, homeworkers and non-home workers.

To provide context for the views raised in the interviews a documentary analysis phase will examine the policies and guidance and information available for staff.

11. Anticipated project dates

Start date: November 2013 End date: June 2015

12. Please describe the sample of participants to be studied (including number, age, gender):

In the development phase of the research three focus groups will be used to identify overarching themes, one group will be a sample of around 6 managers, another will consist of a sample of around 6 home workers and the third will be a sample of around 6 non-home workers. All samples will be purposive drawn from the employees of the Government Department being studied. The sample for the semi structured interviews will also be purposive with initially 12 home workers, 12 non home workers and 6 managers from the organisation. One of the aims of this research is to explore how different groups of employees e.g. men, women, carers, may be affected by the home working initiative therefore I will be aiming to get a sample which includes both men and women in each category.

13. How will participants be recruited and from where? Be as specific as possible.

Participants will be recruited from the Government Department being studied. The Department is based in London and is my own organisation where I am employed on a full time basis in the Corporate Services Team. Participants will be invited to take part in the research via a notice to all staff in the weekly staff bulletin seeking volunteers for the focus groups initially and then for the interview phase.

14. What procedure is proposed for obtaining consent?

Written consent will be sought prior to both the developmental focus group phase and the interviews from all potential participants. An information sheet will be provided giving details of the research and a confidential e-mail addresses will be set up for solely for this research project where potential participants can contact the researcher to register their interest or ask for more details. Participation will be entirely voluntary on the part of individual employees.

15. What discomfort (including psychological), inconvenience or danger could be caused by participation in the project? Please indicate plans to address these potential risks.

None anticipated. Participants may perceive that information they provide during the research could be used by the researcher (Deputy HR Director) for purposes not connected with the research but relevant to their career. For example, individuals may be concerned about negative comments being fed into the disciplinary process or revelations about lack of activity or caring duties undertaken during home working being relayed back to an individuals' manager for performance management purposes. It is vital therefore to be clear about the research relationship and emphasise in the information for participants that all data collected is for the purpose of the research, will remain confidential and anonymous and will not be used within the organisation for any purpose specific to that individual.

Focus groups and interviews will be held in rooms in the meeting room suite which is on a different floor from the office areas well away from the work areas of participants so their colleagues will be unaware they are participating to preserve the confidentiality for participants. The purpose of the meetings will not be recorded in the electronic appointment system to ensure no other employees or the manager can see it if personal calendars are shared.

During the research senior managers may ask "who said that?" In such circumstances the confidentiality of the participant will be preserved and senior managers reminded that not only has the research been undertaken with, and adheres to, sound ethical principles of which confidentiality is one but the Data Protection Act (1998) also applies.

Permission to record the focus groups and interviews will be obtained from the participants prior to the start of the focus group sessions and interviews. Interview participants will be informed that they have the right to stop the interview at any time, ask for the tape recorder to be switched off, and withdraw from the study up to the point that the data is anonymised without there being any penalty or impact on their employment whatsoever. The information sheet will aim to give participants the reassurance that confidentiality is paramount and they can talk without fear of any adverse impact on their working life.

16. What potential risks may exist for the researcher(s)? Please indicate plans to address such risks (for example, details of a lone worker plan).

None anticipated. The study will be carried out in the researcher's normal place of employment and will not include any lone working. Focus groups and interviews will be held in rooms in the meeting room suite so they are well away from the work areas of participants so their colleagues will be unaware they are participating to preserve confidentiality for participants. If a participant wishes to go off site for their interview it will be conducted in a public place of the participants choosing for example a coffee shop in the local area to mitigate any lone worker risk.

17. Whilst we do not generally expect direct benefits to participants as a result of this research, please state here any that result from completion of the study.

It is possible that the research may indicate that information for employees could be clearer or that policies or procedures could benefit from improvement. These issues can then be picked up and addressed following the dissemination of results to the HR community if the organisation chooses to do so.

18. Details of any incentives/payments (including out-of-pocket expenses) made to participants:

None.

19. Briefly describe your data collection and analysis methods, and the rationale for their use

This research will take an exploratory study approach beginning with focus groups in the developmental phase of the research. Previous research into this area has neglected homeworking initiatives which are imposed by the organisation. In order to design appropriate and comprehensive interview schedules focus groups will be used to identify relevant question areas and to refine and validate the proposed interview schedules.

The semi-structured interviews will follow and will gather data from three different types of employee, home workers, non-home workers and managers of home workers to ensure the different viewpoints are explored. In designing the interviews unstructured interviews were viewed as being inappropriate as although valuable for very exploratory studies, they allow the agenda to be set by the interviewee. Structured interviews were also considered however, this approach provides limited responsiveness for the researcher to individual observations and a lack of in-depth questioning can result in a disproportionate degree of data being generated from more articulate interviewees (Arthur and Nazroo, 2012). Semi structured interviews will be used to provide flexibility, with key questions being asked in the same way for each interviewee but with the ability to probe for further information (Patton, 2002).

The interviews will be transcribed from the recordings by the researcher prior to analysis using computer assisted data analysis software (CAQDAS) (Fielding and Lee, 1998) to code the data, manual coding was dismissed as an option due to past experience indicating its lack of flexibility for anything other than very small amounts of data. The specific CAQDAS package has yet to be identified as more research is needed on the features each one offers. Analysis of the data will follow the analytical hierarchy (Spencer, Ritchie and O'Connor, 2012) initially coding material by labelling text as relevant to a particular concept or theme.

As the interviews are transcribed pseudonyms will be allocated to each participant to preserve their anonymity. Details of the names and pseudonyms will be kept separately and securely.

Data collected during this research will be handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998). All data, including the interview tapes and transcripts will be stored securely and will only be accessible by the researcher.

20. Describe the involvement of users/service users in the design and conduct of your research. If you have not involved users/service users in developing your research protocol, please indicate this and provide a brief rationale/explanation.

I have not involved service users as this is exploratory research and there is no specific service being researched. Involving employees would have been inappropriate from an ethical point of view as they may have felt unsure whether they were being asked their opinion as an employee or a research participant.

21. What plan is in place for the storage of data (electronic, digital, paper, etc.)? Please ensure that your plans comply with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Data collected during this research will be handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998). Data, including consent forms, will be stored securely in a cabinet in the researcher's office to which the researcher retains the only key. Electronic records will be stored on the organisation's computer system which is part of the Government Secure Network and all documents will be stored in the researcher's personal folders with passwords on all documents. It should not be necessary to move data via memory sticks between home and work as the researchers has full remote access. Raw data collected from and identifiable to individuals will be retained for the life of the research project and then destroyed following publication of the research. Consent forms will be retained in case proof of consent is needed at a later stage if a participant complains or to provide proof to journal editors that consent has been obtained.

The Information Asset rules and handling procedures which apply to personal data in the organisation of which the researcher is an employee will be applied to the storage of all personal data gathered as part of this research. The researcher has undertaken Government Information Asset training Level 1 and Level 2 (as an information asset owner).

No data collected as part of this research will be used for any purpose other than the research i.e. it will not be used to support measures or decisions against or about individual participants.

22. Will audio or video recording take place? no audio video

If yes, what arrangements have been made for audio/video data storage? At what point in the research will tapes/digital recordings/files be destroyed?

All data, including the focus group and interview tapes and transcripts will be stored securely and will only be accessible by the researcher.

Recordings will be destroyed after they have been transcribed and checked.

23. What are the plans for dissemination of findings from the research?

On completion of the research a paper will be produced for the management board of the organisation explaining the research aims, how the research was undertaken and the findings. An additional section will suggest how the research can benefit the organisation with recommendations, if any, for further action. Recommendations may relate to communication methods, policies or processes.

The HR network of staff will be briefed on the research and findings to enable them to understand the points they may need to consider when advising on or undertaking similar organisational change projects in future.

The results of the study will inform my PhD submission. The results may also be submitted for publication in academic/professional journals and academic/practitioner conference.

24. What particular ethical problems, not previously noted on this application, do you think there are in the proposed study?

The key ethical consideration relating to the researchers role in the organisation has been discussed above.

Signatures: Applicant:

Date:

Project Supervisor* (if applicable):

Date:

*I have reviewed this application, and discussed it with the applicant. I confirm that the project methodology is appropriate. I am happy for this application to proceed to ethical review.

November 2009

References

Arthur, S. & Nazroo, J. (2012). Designing fieldwork strategies and materials. In J. Ritchie & J. Lewis eds. *Qualitative research practice*. London: Sage Publications Ltd, pp. 109-137.

Data Protection Act 1998. London: HMSO.

Fielding, N. G. & Lee, R. M. (1998). *Computer analysis and qualitative research*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Spencer, L., Ritchie, J. & O'Connor, W. (2012). *Analysis: Practices, Principles and Processes*. In J. Ritchie & J. Lewis eds. *Qualitative research practice*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.



Participant Information Sheet – Focus Groups

An Investigation into the Impact of an Organisationally Driven Homeworking Initiative on
Employees and Managers

My name is Judith Marshall-Camm and I am conducting this research as a PhD student in the Organisational Health and Wellbeing programme at Lancaster University, Lancaster, United Kingdom. I am also the Deputy HR Director heading up the HR Policy Division here in the Department.

What is the study about?

Organisations are increasingly introducing homeworking policies and I am interested in how this impacts upon managers and staff in the organisation. Thus, the aim of this study is to advance practical understanding in how homeworking impacts upon all staff and to identify policies, processes or support that may be valued by staff involved in organisational homeworking initiatives.

Why have I been approached?

You have been approached because the study requires information from people who are homeworkers, non-homeworkers or managers of homeworkers.

Do I have to take part?

No. It's completely up to you to decide whether or not you take part. Participation will be entirely voluntary on the part of individual employees, no one is under any obligation to participate and choosing not to take part will have no impact whatsoever on any employees' working situation now or in the future.

What will I be asked to do if I take part?

If you decide you would like to take part, you would be asked to participate in a focus group to identify key themes and areas for the researcher to follow up in more detail in interviews as part of the next phase of the research.

If you decide you would like to take part you would be asked to participate in a small focus group consisting of at most 6 people. The focus groups will be held in a room in the meeting room suite away from your place of work and will not show up in your calendar as a focus group meeting, your line managers and colleagues will be unaware that you are participating unless of course you choose to tell them yourself.

The focus group is expected to last about an hour and will give you the opportunity to talk freely about your experiences. The focus group session will be recorded as it will be very hard for the researcher to run the focus group and take notes of the discussion. Further detail on data confidentiality is given below.

What if I want to withdraw from the research?

You are free to withdraw from participating in the research at any time, if you do withdraw there are no penalties and there would be no adverse impact on your employment at that point or any time in the future.

Will my data be confidential?

The information you provide is confidential. No data from the project will be shared with any other employee of the organisation. The data collected for this study will be stored securely and only the researcher conducting this study will have access to this data:

- I would like to record the focus groups with your permission.
- Audio recordings will be destroyed after the project has been submitted.
- The files on the computer will be encrypted (that is no-one other than the researcher will be able to access them) and both the computer itself and the documents password protected. The data will be deleted after the research is completed.
- The typed notes from the focus group recordings will be made anonymous, no identifying information including your name will be included.

There are some limits to confidentiality: if you say anything in the focus group which makes me think that you, or someone else, is at significant risk of harm, I will have to break

confidentiality and speak to a member of staff about this. If possible, I will tell you if I have to do this.

Within the focus groups the following set of ground rules will be presented to, added to if necessary and agreed by the group to help things run smoothly and respect the views and confidentiality of all participants.

- Only one person should talk at a time.
- What is shared in the room stays in the room to assure confidentiality for all participants.
- It is important to hear everyone's ideas and opinions. There are no right or wrong answers to questions – just ideas, experiences and opinions, which are all valuable.
- It is important to hear all sides of an issue – both the positive and the negative.

What will happen to the results?

The results will be summarised and reported in a thesis and will be submitted for publication in academic or professional journals, academic conferences and other media as appropriate. No information revealing the personal opinions of participants in this study will be passed on to other organisational members.

Are there any risks?

There are no risks anticipated with participating in this study. However, if you experience any distress following participation you are encouraged to inform the researcher and contact the resources provided at the end of this sheet.

Are there any benefits to taking part?

Although you may find participating interesting, there are no direct benefits in taking part.

Who has reviewed the project?

This study has been reviewed by the Faculty of Health and Medicine Research Ethics Committee, and approved by the University Research Ethics Committee at Lancaster University.

Where can I obtain further information about the study if I need it?

If you have any questions about the study, please contact the main researcher: Judith Marshall-Camm j.marshall-camm@lancaster.ac.uk 0207 944 8126 or my supervisor:

Dr Alison Collins a.m.collins@lancaster.ac.uk (01524) 594852

Complaints

If you wish to make a complaint or raise concerns about any aspect of this study and do not want to speak to the researcher, you can contact:

Professor Susan Cartwright Tel: (01524) 592430

Email: s.cartwright@lancaster.ac.uk

Division of Health Research

C04 Furness

Lancaster University

Lancaster

LA1 4YG

If you wish to speak to someone outside of the Organisational Health and Well Being Doctorate Programme, you may also contact:

Professor Paul Bates Tel: (01524) 593718

Associate Dean for Research Email: p.bates@lancaster.ac.uk

Faculty of Health and Medicine

(Division of Biomedical and Life Sciences)

Lancaster University

Lancaster

LA1 4YD

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet.

Resources in the event of distress

Should you feel distressed either as a result of taking part, or in the future, the following resources may be of assistance:

Employee Assistance Provider - Workplace Options

The Department considers the well-being of its staff of utmost importance, and recognises its responsibility to support those experiencing problems. It therefore provides a free and confidential Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) for all staff.

The EAP service offers direct access to a team of highly trained information specialists and counsellors, who are geared up to help you tackle a whole range of practical and emotional issues, such as work-related matters, financial and legal issues and personal concerns.

The Employee Assistance Programme includes the following:

Information service

That can be accessed via telephone or their website:

Although this list is by no means exhaustive.

Counselling service

Employees have access to short-term telephone or face-to-face counselling.

Accessing the Service

For telephone support and assistance call: 0800 243 458

Available: 24 hours a day 7 days a week

From outside the UK call: +44(0) 20 8987 6550

Minicom: 020 8987 6574

Email: assistance@workplaceoptions.com



Participant Information Sheet - Interviews

An Investigation into the Impact of an Organisationally Driven Homeworking Initiative on
Employees and Managers

My name is Judith Marshall-Camm and I am conducting this research as a PhD student in the Organisational Health and Wellbeing programme at Lancaster University, Lancaster, United Kingdom. I am also the Deputy HR Director heading up the HR Policy Division here in the Department.

What is the study about?

Organisations are increasingly introducing homeworking policies and I am interested from a personal and academic point of view in how this impacts upon managers and staff in the organisation. Thus, the aim of this study is to advance practical understanding in how homeworking impacts upon all staff and to identify policies, processes or support that may be valued by staff involved in organisational homeworking initiatives.

Why have I been approached?

You have been approached because the study requires information from people who are homeworkers, non-homeworkers or managers of homeworkers.

Do I have to take part?

No. It's completely up to you to decide whether or not you take part. Participation will be entirely voluntary on the part of individual employees, no one is under any obligation to participate and choosing not to take part will have no impact whatsoever on any employees' working situation now or in the future.

What will I be asked to do if I take part?

If you decide you would like to take part, you would be asked to participate in an interview. The interview will take place at a time convenient for you in a room in the meeting room suite away from your place of work and will not show up in your calendar as an interview, your line managers and colleagues will be unaware that you are participating unless of course you choose to tell them yourself.

The interview will last about an hour and will give you the opportunity to talk freely about your experiences. The interview will be recorded as it will be very hard for the researcher to conduct the interview and take notes of your answers. Further detail on data confidentiality is given below.

What if I want to withdraw from the research?

You are free to withdraw from participating in the research at any time, if you do withdraw there are no penalties and there would be no adverse impact on your employment at that point or any time in the future.

Will my data be confidential?

The information you provide is confidential. No data from the project will be shared with any other employee of the organisation. The data collected for this study will be stored securely and only the researcher conducting this study will have access to this data:

- I would like to record the interviews with your permission. However, you do not need to answer all the questions if you do not wish to and you may ask for the tape recorder to be switched off at any time during the interview.
- Audio recordings will be destroyed after the project has been submitted.
- The files on the computer will be encrypted (that is no-one other than the researcher will be able to access them) and both the computer itself and the documents password protected. The data will be deleted after the research is completed.
- The typed version of your interview will be made anonymous by removing any identifying information including your name. Anonymised direct quotations from your interview may be used in the reports or publications from the study, but your name will not be attached to them.

There are some limits to confidentiality: if what is said in the interview makes me think that you, or someone else, is at significant risk of harm, I will have to break confidentiality and speak to a member of staff about this. If possible, I will tell you if I have to do this.

What will happen to the results?

The results will be summarised and reported in a thesis and will be submitted for publication in academic or professional journals, academic conferences and other media as appropriate. No information revealing the personal opinions of participants in this study will be passed on to other organisational members.

Are there any risks?

There are no risks anticipated with participating in this study. However, if you experience any distress following participation you are encouraged to inform the researcher and contact the resources provided at the end of this sheet.

Are there any benefits to taking part?

Although you may find participating interesting, there are no direct benefits in taking part.

Who has reviewed the project?

This study has been reviewed by the Faculty of Health and Medicine Research Ethics Committee, and approved by the University Research Ethics Committee at Lancaster University.

Where can I obtain further information about the study if I need it?

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Email: s.cartwright@lancaster.ac.uk

Division of Health Research

C04 Furness

Lancaster University

Lancaster

LA1 4YG

If you wish to speak to someone outside of the Organisational Health and Well Being Doctorate Programme, you may also contact:

Professor Paul Bates Tel: (01524) 593718

Associate Dean for Research Email: p.bates@lancaster.ac.uk

Faculty of Health and Medicine

(Division of Biomedical and Life Sciences)

Lancaster University

Lancaster

LA1 4YD

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet.

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Employee Assistance Provider - Workplace Options

The Department considers the well-being of its staff of utmost importance, and recognises its responsibility to support those experiencing problems. It therefore provides a free and confidential Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) for all staff.

The EAP service offers direct access to a team of highly trained information specialists and counsellors, who are geared up to help you tackle a whole range of practical and emotional issues, such as work-related matters, financial and legal issues and personal concerns.

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Available: 24 hours a day 7 days a week

From outside the UK call: +44(0) 20 8987 6550

Minicom: 020 8987 6574

Email: assistance@workplaceoptions.com



Consent Form

Study Title: An Investigation into the Impact of an Organisationally Driven Homeworking Initiative on Employees and Managers

Organisations are increasingly introducing homeworking policies and I am interested in how this impacts upon managers, staff and the organisation itself. Thus, the aim of this study is to advance practical understanding in how homeworking impacts upon all staff and to identify policies, processes or support that may be valued by staff involved in organisational homeworking initiatives.

Before you consent to participating in the study we ask that you read the participant information sheet and mark each box below with your initials if you agree. If you have any questions or queries before signing the consent form please speak to the investigator, Judith Marshall-Camm.

Please initial box
after each
statement

<p>1. I confirm that I have read the information sheet and fully understand what is expected of me within this study.</p>	
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2. I confirm that I have had the opportunity to ask any questions and to have them answered.	
3. I understand that my interview will be audio recorded and then made into an anonymised written transcript.	
4. I understand that audio recordings will be kept until the research project has been examined.	
5. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and that this will not affect my employment in anyway.	
6. I understand that once my data have been anonymised and incorporated into themes it might not be possible for it to be withdrawn, though every attempt will be made to extract my data, up to the point of publication.	
7. I understand that the information from my interview will be pooled with other participants' responses, anonymised and may be published.	
8. I consent to information and quotations from my interview being used in reports, conferences and training events.	
9. I understand that any information I give will remain strictly confidential and anonymous I consent to Lancaster University keeping written transcriptions of the interview for 5 years after the study has finished.	
10. I consent to take part in the above study.	

Name of Participant _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Name of Researcher Judith Marshall-Camm Signature _____ Date _____

Focus Group Script (indicative rather than to be read verbatim)

Welcome to this focus group looking at the issues which surround the new policy on homeworking.

My name is Judith Marshall-Camm and I am conducting research as a PhD student in the Organisational Health and Wellbeing programme at Lancaster University.

Before we start I'll just give you a bit of background to what this study is about.

Organisations are increasingly introducing home working schemes and I am interested in how this impacts upon managers and staff. Thus, the aim of this study is to advance practical understanding in how home working impacts upon all staff and to identify policies, processes or support that may be valued by staff involved in organisational home working initiatives.

This is an area I have an interest in and I am very keen to hear your views and get your input into this study.

I need to make clear that whatever you say in the focus group session will remain confidential as it will only be used by myself as the researcher as part of this research project. I would also ask that the group respect each other's confidentiality and do not refer to any of the discussion once the focus group has finished.

I suggest we agree the following set of ground rules which can be added to if the group wants to help things run smoothly and respect the views and confidentiality of all participants.

- Only one person should talk at a time.
- What is shared in the room stays in the room to assure confidentiality for all participants.
- It is important to hear everyone's ideas and opinions. There are no right

or wrong answers to questions – just ideas, experiences and opinions, which

are all valuable.

- It is important to hear all sides of an issue – both the positive and the

Negative.

Excellent, thank you for agreeing these.

It would be good to begin with introductions, if you could all introduce yourselves, you don't have to say exactly where you work but you may want to say something about the nature of your work, [for home working group - how long you have been working from home] and a brief description of your personal circumstances for instance if you have caring responsibilities.

As you know from the information sheet I am looking at the impact of home working on staff and managers.

How many of you are aware of the new policy and expectation of more people working from home?

Before we move on to discuss home working in more detail can we spend a few moments gathering views on the initiative in general, how well it has been communicated and what you understand the organisation is aiming for.

[Discussion around the level of understanding of the initiative, knowledge of the communications and information provided].

OK, thank you for that now let's move on to explore some of the issues which might arise for you as homeworkers, non-homeworkers (or managers only in Managers workshop) as a result of this initiative.

What do you think of the home working initiative?

Do you think the home working initiative has affected you in your work?

If so how?

Next, I want to explore whether you think more home working is a good thing and if so why, what are the advantages, if we could spend a few moments considering that.

[Discussion on views on advantages and any issues which may emerge, park any disadvantages on flipchart for next stage].

Now having looked at the advantages of home working from different points of view I want us to think about the possible disadvantages, these may be for the individual, the team or colleagues remaining in the office.

[Discussion on disadvantages]

Finally, do you think that working from home has any effect on people's career prospects?

We have now reached the end of the focus group session but before we finish I would like to ask whether any of you any other points or comments you want to make which haven't been covered so far?

Thank you for participating in this focus group. The next stage is for me to revise my interview questions to take account of the issues that you have helpfully raised.

Transcript of Focus Groups

Focus Group – Non-Homeworkers 14 March 2014

How many of you are aware of the new policy and expectation of more people working from home?

Yes, not enough desks so work from home, taking desks away was a way of saying work from home if you can.

Definite and hugely encouraged for Olympics and then momentum continued but feels like it has died away a bit, and there's not enough IT, also some people are told to be in the office, you not sure how they can be in and out.

Seems like its fine if you're senior but don't feel I am senior enough. In other depts. everyone has own laptop and blackberry. I don't want to work from home a particular number of days a week but might want to do a bit on Sat afternoon say e-mail myself something, it feels I've gone back in time compared to other dept but at Women's Network event the panel gave assurance that there would be funding and equipment to do so.

Panel said complete culture change these days, no one has a problem with people working at home these days, won't think people aren't doing work and if anyone wants equipment, sure it would be there. But I think things are looking different from the senior point of view.

I'm perfectly sure if I wanted to work from home my manager would be agreeable and the equipment would be available. I think it's different for me because my managers do it, my team colleagues all work from home very regularly.

I'm very old fashioned as far as working's concerned, 5 days in office person, only worked at home to read paper based documents, peace and quiet. But I think my team is really flexible, never encountered slightest inflexibility about working methods, whatever works for us is accommodated. I am confident if it could be arranged it would be arranged.

I get very distracted in my home environment, when I have done it I did weird hours because it took me ages to settle down. If I had work that I thought I would do better at home and I said to X I think I would do this better at home I know there wouldn't be a problem.

I know if I wanted to work from home certain days a week my managers would agree. In that newsletter that was sent round it said you can't have a laptop that you stick in cupboard in case you want to work from home, I agree with that, but in other depts it seems you can do that or have a blackberry.

Seems to be inconsistent across the organisation, I know off someone who's line manager expects them to evidence the hours they are working by e-mailing them the minute they start work. So, it seems some managers don't like the idea of team members working at home.

What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages around home working?

I view it as a positive step as long as it's managed properly same as any other work issue. So long as your manager is clear on what you're expected to produce while you're working from home.

There's a difference between how people work from home, some have their office phone diverted to home or blackberry so you don't know where they are, at home or working on another floor in the building. Some people work at home to read or write a report and they won't answer any calls it's as though they're not in work. If you are doing two days a week from home it should be as though you are in the office.

Xs calls go through to her mobile all the time, unless you can see she's not in you wouldn't know, it's as though she might be sitting on another floor. For some other people working at home, you have to send them an e-mail or see if anyone knows what their mobile number is, this isn't too bad if you are part of their team but if you are from somewhere else in the business it's difficult to know whether someone is around, people end up wandering along and asking if anyone knows where x is.

Difference in my mind and effect on people in the building as to whether people are genuinely working from home or just working at home.

It needs to be managed properly it should be as if you are in the building.

Only time I have done it was when I needed peace and quiet to work on something and didn't want to be disturbed.

If someone who I work with is working from home I like to think that it is as though they were on another floor and I can interact with them without seeing them physically in front of me.

A number of times when a colleague has been working from home and it has caused me problems as I knew I wasn't going to be able to reach them when I needed to. This was in past in other teams I worked in.

I felt I was losing something when other person was working at home and they weren't contactable in normal way. Phone would go to voicemail and e-mails wouldn't get answered.

If you can do your job with somebody I can't see that it should matter if they are physically there or not.

I take 'working differently' to the extreme I like to work in other parts of the building and be detached from my team especially if doing a specific bit of work, I can concentrate better and get myself going.

On the one hand we should focus on outcomes what is the job of work that that person is doing, on the other hand what about the fellow team members who rely on being able to contact them.

What is the impact on you as a team member?

I find having Lync completes the picture, I can talk to X my line manager in the same conversational way I would if they were in the office. I don't need to e-mail and think who to send it to etc. It's more chatty it makes it as if you are working as part of a team.

Yesterday my line manager was using it to ask me personal stuff the sort of stuff a line manager would talk about when engaging with their team. I don't care whether I see her as long as she engages with me in that informal way.

I talk to team members in the same way if they are working from home it makes them feel part of the team, it might be about work or a personal thing I don't want to put in an e-mail trail. It's what I would do if they were sitting next to me.

I use Lync to keep track of whether people are available but not to message them. It's useful if they are in another part of the building.

You all saw comms on Olympics and Working Differently, do you think the organisation expects you to work from home now?

No don't feel pressured at all.

I have always seen it as a privilege being allowed to work from home, in the interests of diversity it should be a right.

I have heard of people being told they couldn't so that makes me see it as a privilege. Someone was devastated when they asked for homeworking and were told they couldn't.

No I don't feel pressurised not at all. I know if I needed to I could.

I think it has changed over the past few years, in my previous role about 3 years ago I can't believe I would ever have been allowed to work from home. The equipment just wasn't available really.

Since Olympics I haven't experienced any barriers, I'm sure I could if I wanted to.

I think the barriers have come down, during the Olympics there was a strong push to work from home but don't feel that as much now.

I thought it was a bit off as there is a cost to me, heat, light and season ticket which I have paid for so why stay at home a couple of days a week. I felt I work for X and they need to provide me with a place and equipment to do my job.

There was no benefit to me to work from home, only a cost except in rare circumstances when weather was very bad and I had a laptop so it saved me having to travel in the storm. So apart from that flexibility I wouldn't want to work from home regularly.

Cost is even more in the winter with heat and light on and we're not paid particularly well.

I feel I have the whole picture when I'm here, I know what's going on, I pick up the nuances and it's about visibility to senior people. It raises your profile with senior people if you are in the office and can be the one to help. If you're at home your less likely to be contacted – out of sight out of mind as it were.

You can get lumbered with everything if you are in the office but on the other hand that gives you the opportunity to raise your profile.

No don't think it impacts negatively on your career.

X is a senior manager and she isn't in on a Friday and although we all know she is working it can still be frustrating that she isn't in the office.

It is helpful seeing senior people as you can grab them for a quick question if you can see them sitting there. You just can't do that if they are at home.

Colleagues working at home often ask me to catch a senior manager when they have a minute because you can't see that at home.

Any further observations which haven't come out?

I do feel an increase in my workload when a colleague is working from home. All the physical stuff in the office comes to me, people see me and know I am a member of that team so give it to me to deal with and of course you're never likely to say I'm not doing it are you?

Even though I don't do it I like having the option of working from home so I view it totally as a positive thing.

I hope that as this beds in more the protocols like logging your phone through and those kind of things people get more used to doing them so there is more properly working from home.

Focus Group - Managers 19 March 2014

How many of you are aware of the new policy and expectation of more people working from home? How well was it communicated and do you understand what the organisation is aiming for?

I think my observation is that the message seemed to be rather general and nonspecific about homeworking, working differently being something that the department was in favour of I certainly haven't seen or been aware of much in the way of a description or guidance or policy that the Dept is seeking to achieve x amount of people homeworking or that what they would consider a sensible amount of homeworking for an individual.

Also, it depends on circumstances. So as a manager I feel I haven't got the information or high level back up to enable me to make decisions if requests are put to me about different types of home working. It seems to me very much a case of you make the decision and you live with that, which may be what they want to achieve but it isn't structured and no one seems to have thought through what the cumulative effect of this would be.

A specific example, I've got a member of staff who had a period of extended sick leave and was medically recommended for a phased return to work and she said she wanted to work from home on a two day a week basis. Because of the nature of her work which requires a certain amount of visibility and hands on support to other people it would be more effective for the team if she worked from home just one day a week. From a business perspective that seems to give the best balance. After some consideration she said why can't I work two days at home as some other people do. I had to go back to her and say these are the reasons why I think it should only be one day, your post requires that you should be in the office four days a week and in terms of your visibility I think it would be beneficial to you. In the end she saw the

benefits to her but had she challenged and said no I don't agree that there is a need for that and I feel I am being disadvantaged by not being allowed to work from home as many other people are, I don't know what the next steps I would take would be or what I would draw down on in the context of describing the needs of the business in contrast to the needs of the individual.

In that situation my only course of action would have been to escalate it to the next level up for the decision to be made, but don't know what they would have done.

Do you feel any change as managers in how you respond to requests now?

I think you have to say yes because you feel that the organisation is pushing it so I think you would have to have reason to say no.

I would say my usual position is 'yes' about half my team have non-standard working patterns but I like that. I would automatically say 'yes' to them because it allows you to be more output focussed. You can say I'm giving you this, you want to work from home but in return I expect flexibility which might mean working evenings or weekends which is better than a formal work plan.

You can have a conversation that says when somebody says to you can I work at home or can I do this work at home you say absolutely, I don't care as long as you deliver and then when you have a peak of work you can remind them to be output focussed. So, I think it's a good thing, the pinch points would be if you had a member of staff who was abusing it, that would be difficult to manage, then you would have to say no the contract isn't working out for us obviously we'll need to change things, I would want you to do this or this.

Is it that certain people in your team regularly work a number of days at home or is it very flexible so depending on what they do they might work 2 days at home one week and one day at home the next week?

Out of a team of twelve, five of the team have set days. Some have compressed hours and the others all work at home on an ad hoc basis when they want or need to. All of us work at home at various points.

I do think if it is important that you're visible then there is something that is lost so although if you're developing a policy it might be very clear as an output but the other side of actually being seen doing things and making an impact can be lost and needs thinking about.

I don't work at home very often and the way I tackle that is that I am usually and in and others are available via phone or blackberry or will even come in if needed.

Impact on Career?

It impacts on picking things up just from what's going on around you, potentially it has an impact because you are more isolated. So, the kind of harder stuff that I do, cos I don't use the word softer, it's a lot to do with that, what's the latest thing that people are thinking about.

I think there is still an element of when something unexpected occurs out of the blue there is still an element of looking who's in the office as the default, particularly if it something that hasn't got an obvious owner for example and people say who can we get to deal with this I think there is a thing about asking who is actually physically here and they are more likely to pick it up.

Dialling into meetings it is harder to make a decent contribution when you can't see people and working out the right moment.

For me a lot of the work we do is dial-ins anyway where most people are dialling in from other offices so it's much less of an issue.

In terms of keeping people updated for me the issue is making sure people are involved in the work because as soon as someone becomes isolated they get more isolated so as long as people are phoning each other or e-mailing constantly then even when they are at home they are involved in the work. It's when people slowly drift away from the work that's when they get isolated from both sides from the office and themselves.

What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages around home working?

One of the issues is because of the range of people who are working different days to get certain groups of people together at any given point they may only coincide once a week if that because of the sometimes fragmented and sometimes unstructured patterns so they don't match. I think there's a bit of that synergy that goes missing, with my team one works in the office all the time, that's his choice which is fine, another one works at home one day a week and I work at home one day and the final member may work at home a couple of days if working on finance stuff. That makes it difficult trying to get everyone together even though it's a small team.

I notice in my interaction with other teams it's very broken down in an odd way so actually Wednesday may be the only day that you can expect to see a set of people for various things if you want to set up face to face meetings and stuff like that.

I'm fine without the face to face meetings, we will phone each other up or e-mail so I'm quite relaxed about that so I don't mind where they are, I am so used to dealing with other offices on the phone it's the same with the team. Having the office is not the be all and end all for me.

The positive is that people can flex their working pattern to pick children up from school and decide to do work at a time that suits them best and that's great, I think the negative is the visibility and I think it's different when people are working from home than when they are working from a different office because then they have got other people around them. It's very helpful for them but there is something about lack of visibility.

What is the impact on you as a manager?

I would find it hard to refuse, I would have to have a strong reason to say no.

I am okay with saying no to requests, don't have a problem with it.

As a one off or regularly?

Recently I had to talk to a member of the team about changing their work pattern, if you have to you have to, it's fine. I had to ask members of the team to change their days working at home to cover and be available for work in the office. It was OK doing it, I think they understood the reason and we came to an arrangement that works for both them and the business. I think they were OK with the idea that flexible working does have to be flexible for both sides, the employer as well as for them.

Is this focus group representative do you think?

In my previous post working on policy, you could only do some home working, it had to be very structured. A lot of time you had to be available at short notice because a lot of it was collaborative working. There was weekend working which people did at home but it would have been quite difficult to do any more than that, there wasn't a lot of leeway for home working. In fact, I think that would be the case in many other parts of the business where there is a much closer and more integrated way of operating and the need for visibility and direct access for things and being able to talk to people about things where phoning them up doesn't work so well.

I know of one senior manager who forbids any home working in her team and insists her staff don't arrive until after her as she wants to be able to see them working. She thinks they sit and read magazines and don't do any work if she's not there. So, there are different attitudes from different bits of the business so at the extreme end you've got ones that feed into casework where the relationship between the manager and the member of staff has broken down and the line manager doesn't feel they are getting the value of work from the member of staff. So, I know there are different attitudes from different line managers about the business need side but I think there are also a lot of managers who like and support it.

It was raised in a diversity meeting that there was a senior manager who was not allowing home working and I have raised that with the change team. They said they would reinforce the messages.

I think there is an issue about consistency and fairness to address these issues, if you've got quite a big spectrum of how this operates. Again, without more information or a stronger steer from the senior management on this it does leave people and these issues open. What are your rights as a member of staff to request home working and if it's denied what are your avenues if you wanted to challenge that?

We know what the legal protection is and what the employees' rights are and we can say no but we also know what we have said about the culture and trying to move forward. I think it's pretty clear overall what management want to happen but I think they've left us as managers to decide if we want to support that and to do it. I think there is inconsistency but I don't know what management would do if they wanted to encourage it in places where it isn't happening. I don't know really what they could do. Because obviously it's very difficult as a manager, if your style is that you want face to face meetings and you want people to be around its very difficult for you to change your style and they couldn't force that on managers.

Let's take the example, at the moment I work from home one day a week if I applied for a post elsewhere there would be no mention in the job advert about home working so if I went to the interview, got the job and then said I currently work from home one day a week, would the line manager say well actually we won't support that so if you want the job you'll have to give that up and come into the office five days a week or we'll give the job to someone else.

They could certainly say do it on a different day if someone in the team is already working from home that day. So, there's a potential impact on people moving from one bit of the business to another.

Any further observations which haven't come out?

It is interesting working in my bit of the business, you would hope that it would be seen as one of the exemplars. I've picked up the general feeling of support and that this is a good thing but again I don't think that's ever been explicit.

Hasn't it?

Not in so many words, maybe I'm quite a literal person. Working from home is good but what does that mean? What boundaries might you attach to that? If someone said to me actually I would like to work from home four days a week, at what point do you say the balance is tipping now so you might find this more difficult and it wouldn't enable things to work as efficiently as we would like.

What I was thinking is that it is very visible that X who is my senior manager works from home one day a week and that sort of makes it explicit.

It's implicit that it's a good thing but it's not actually written down, it's there in the ether and the ether and it crops up in conversations but it's not actually written down.

No but it's built into the design of 'Working differently' there are eight desks for ten people and it costs 5k for someone to work in the office rather than at home. Those savings won't materialise unless people work from home. The savings might crystallise if we move building that'll be x million pounds of cashable savings when we move as that will probably be to a smaller building. If we didn't work at home and the business didn't get the message there wouldn't be enough desks for everyone to work in the office so it's built into the design that we should work that way on aggregate numbers.

But where's the criteria, the ground rules, the structure and communications apart from you all need to do it?

I love that it's not written down, it's by far the best way.

I can see why they would choose not to as you can set yourself up for a lot of things. Should conflict arise it might prove difficult either for a member of staff or for the line manager, and the conflict would sit with the line manager to resolve.

Focus Group – Homeworkers 27 March 2014

How many of you are aware of the new policy and expectation of more people working from home? How well was it communicated and do you understand what the organisation is aiming for?

I've welcomed it, since I've joined because I didn't used to do working from home before as the organisation I came from didn't allow it. With kids it's been a welcome change for me in my working pattern, it's helped me quite a bit.

I was surprised by the approach here, in the NHS where I came from it was quite rigid, you had to go into the office and you had to be there all the time there was no working at home. So, coming here for me it was a really good change and I think for me I'm happier as well, I can pick the children up and drop them off.

My line manager told me about it when I arrived, he's got kids and he asked me whether I would like to work from home maybe a day a week. I started off with a day and now I've increased it to two days a week at home and it's helped a lot.

For me my journey's slightly different, I've been working from home for a minimum of one day a week since my son was born so that's a good 12 years at least. I was in a part of the business with a flexible culture in the team at the time anyway, and there was many more of us. I was a junior grade at the time and I put in a request on my return from maternity leave. I knew that the organisation had a policy that when you returned from mat leave then you had the option to come back and work flexibly and I chose to work one day a week from home it was going to be a Friday but because there were other members of staff working from home on a Friday I opted for the Monday so that was formalised and that's been the case ever since and I've been fortunate enough to do it ever since. I told my manager who was a senior manager

and saying this is what I'm doing, and telling her what milestones I'd met, so I made a point of doing that myself. But she said it wasn't necessary she knew what I was doing and she trusted me.

Coming forward I have been lucky enough to stay in the same area and work with managers who themselves work flexibly anyway and that has helped. As part of developing the Olympics policy which talked about and encouraged flexible ways of working as that was happening you got a feeling that for staff who were doing it, it was fine but there was still a degree of presenteeism particularly around junior staff who may not have had access to the technology, laptops, and some of their work was admin driven and therefore being in the office was easier. For example, photocopying, diary and calendars, those type of tasks that perhaps they felt disadvantaged them because they couldn't do them from home. That's what I was beginning to pick up particularly that where you worked made a difference in terms of how welcoming it was.

And post Olympics and the move towards 'working differently' I think within my division there is a positive culture of that and I think you can see that on Thursday and Friday when you can see how quiet it is a huge movement in my area, I'm not sure if it happens elsewhere but within my area. I think we've kind of embraced it more so than other bits of the organisation.

I think the organisation has moved, I remember back to perhaps five or six years ago when I started working from home it was a case of a justification approach and I agree with others that it depended on grades there was a feeling that you need to be a certain grade. I think we've moved in so far that a lot more people higher up in the chain are doing some of those admin tasks. For example, having a single copier that everyone uses makes that argument for having junior staff doing those kinds of jobs less strong so I feel a sort of shift in that respect. Also agree that seeing more people doing it in the management chain has led to a bit of a sea change.

I also agree that in my area I think it has certainly been more accommodating in terms of people working flexibly, I think there has been something of leading by example which has helped to shift from people being perceived as slacking to it being seen as a positive thing to do because you can be quite productive.

Also, you get the flexibility which is good if you've got caring responsibilities or you just feel there's some things I need to do where in the office it's less easy to concentrate and you can't focus and you can do work at the time when I would normally be travelling, that's working time where I can actually get through a chunk of things and finish at a time that's a little bit earlier.

I do think there has been a shift and I see it beyond my own area, I work from home on Friday's and if I'm contacting people via e-mail I see a lot more out of office messages coming back saying working from home, also if I have been in the office on the odd Friday it feels a bit like the Marie Celeste. That's good because it means it's not just one pocket who are working in a flexible way. So very much a more accommodating approach to working from home.

Although I do think there are still pockets of certain line managers who see it as a burden, I think that has become less so over time and I think it will become less so going forward.

Can I just add, thinking about my team I work in, and out of the five of us, four of us work from home on different days so for the one individual present in the office, they are the person people tend to go to if it's a query because others are not physically in the office there's a tendency for that individual to be the one everybody goes to, and I think that can be a bit unfair. Rather than e-mail others when one person gets all the queries I think might feel a bit annoyed.

I recognise that kind of scenario but I see it the other way, I use this example, people wouldn't normally call on you without contacting you in advance to see if you will be there, so I think

we need to move away from that culture where people expect you to be sat there in a specific place all the time. I think there's a behavioural issue with people expecting you to be there so I don't think we should be too concerned personally about people coming up to you. I think there's an issue about people saying why always me but I go back to the fact that there's so many ways in which people can be contacted, there's e-mail, phones, or of it's a meeting there's teleconferencing so I think people need to be a bit less old school in the way in which they think about that.

But, there's kind of a mixture because on the one hand there's been a message around don't just work in your silo, get up and walk to see the person, so you follow that and get up and go and see that individual don't just e-mail! So, it's all about balance having those same messages, yes get up and walk and talk but if they are not there then try contacting them another way.

How do you contact other people?

I haven't got a blackberry so I tend to use mobile phone and I call whether it's to London, Sheffield or Leeds I'll ring.

I have a blackberry and what helps is being able to see diaries and mobile numbers. I don't really see a real issue with the accessibility side of things but it's an issue for people who are very channel minded in so far as how they like to contact people.

I get a lot of people calling me at home on my mobile. I leave my mobile number on the calendar and they do call me but I don't know if that's because I don't work in a massive team. I am the only person that deals with certain issues so they feel they have to call me, there isn't anyone else physically in the office that they can go to.

How easy do you find it to contact other home workers?

I think a lot of people are not contactable even when they are in the office because they spend a lot of time in meetings, so in fact you are probably more likely to be able to contact someone

who is working from home because they are less likely to be in a meeting. I think that's the other side of the equation.

If your line manager works from home, do you think this has any effect on you?

On me personally no it doesn't impact and that's probably because of the way I work anyway, but I can see where another member of my team who is the one who is more present that can cause an issue for them. But for me personally no.

I think for me it's less about that but more about whether the line manager is, you know, switched on and is... I wouldn't say sympathetic that sounds patronising but more accommodating so they get it, they're not wedded to this one way of working and they that as long as you're delivering its ok.

I don't think it's essential that people role model I think it's more around the individual and the line manager that understands it will reap the benefits and therefore there will be more people working remotely.

Impact on Career?

I think it goes back to the point I made before who are the people who are overseeing one's career. There's two answers to that, partly it's the line manager which I don't see as much of an issue. What's more of an issue is the other people around who might be in a different place on the issue and who have a perception that so and so was not around when they came to see them. So, there is an occasion when they've not been around and they blow that out of all proportion so this is where the perception seems to impact.

But its six of one and half a dozen of the other so it depends on who you're trying to impress so to speak in so far as trying to get on its alright if they are the ones who are more aware of the benefits.

I think it comes back to the line manager, there can be inconsistency and it's about people's attitudes are. You can't have this switch which turns off their behaviours and you can't see or prove whether everyone is thinking the same way so that's a difficult nut to crack. I don't have an answer to that one. But I do think it can have an impact on people's career development.

I think I agree with (name) where your immediate line management chain and their perception of working from home means it's about trust and issues can arise. When I went on secondment and that environment allowed me to do it. But if I went into a team where they were all very desk bound there may have been problems. So, I think it very much depends on the line management chain, the area of the business you go into and perhaps sadly your grade as well. And I suspect that perhaps the more junior folk might struggle in making their case to work from home, it's not as simple and as easy as when you're a higher grade where you can perhaps articulate more your work might be more suitable for homeworking or you can make it that way.

Do you think the Department expects it?

Oh yes definitely been explicit about that. But I do think it has worked differently in different places and for different grades so I am not sure we have cracked it for lower grades where because we have eroded the bottom grade as such, the next level up is still doing a lot of admin stuff which makes them more paper based in their tasks and needing to be present if they are working directly to a senior manager. Those roles lend themselves more to having to be in the office. So, in other words some roles lend themselves better to home working than others.

I don't think the message is clear, if you look on the intranet and the information on there I don't think it links itself well to the 'Working Differently', and home working. I don't think it mentions that we are promoting more home working because of the 'Working Differently' initiative.

I think the Olympics was much more focussed on changing how you work, staggering journeys, working different hours etc. Home working was just one part of that, the message was about reducing travel. After that questions cropped up about how the Dept would support staff with home working in the longer term but the information was hard to find.

I don't think there is a clear link. Back when I started doing it, probably because we had more resources, you were asked about your home working environment. Not that any special equipment was offered up per se but you were asked what you might need. As resources have shrunk its now very patchy.

You're right it is patchy (echoed by everyone in focus group).

Yes there is no awareness or culture of working safely at home, no one does assessments of the home environment anymore, that's gone.

Absolutely!

It's odd because at a time when the organisation is saying it wants more home working the support its providing is less (chorus of agreement).

I bet if you did a straw poll of those who are working from home and asked what does that look like? I bet people would say "I am balancing my laptop on my lap". I used to balance it on my bed, prop it up and probably broke all the health and safety rules.

People should have the right environment to support them in working from home and I don't think the organisation does that.

There needs to be guidance on how to work properly from home.

What about guidance on making the decision about home working?

No, I've never seen any.

My manager looked for it and I tried to look that up and I couldn't find anything to help her decision making.

I think the back drop is say 'yes' because it is expected but here is no 'but what will that look like'? What is your environment and home like, that conversation is just not covered.

Post Olympics there has been change but maybe we as an organisation are not being very clear what we mean by flexible home working. We haven't really prised out or being very clear about what we mean by it. It gets muddled up with flexi-time and home working so what exactly do we mean? And if we know what we mean then we know what that looks like and therefore how do we support staff.

I think managers are sometimes a bit scared of people working from home. They are scared to ask people if they need them at work in the office to come in but people might refuse because they work at home that day. I don't know what a manager would do, would they insist they turn up at the office? Can they be just as flexible as the line manager wants them to be?

There isn't enough guidance on it so the line managers feel, well I don't really know what I'm doing. I don't know how to approach an employee if I need them to come in on a certain day, are they likely to say no I can't come in and they might be frightened of what to do then.

I remember during the Olympics when my manger asked for information on how to manager staff remotely, we dug around but it was so sparse. You know, how do you manage staff remotely? But also there is an important point around the flexibility around that. Up until now I've never been in a situation where I've been asked to work on my working at home day. I've offered to where I've known that it's been crunch time and I've been asked if I am going to take the Monday on another day, but it never occurred to me to do that so I have lost many Mondays just through not asking to take it another day.

It's good when staff are flexible themselves but I think that line managers worry that if there is someone who won't be flexible what they should do, but of course it's not in their contract. So how does the line manager deal with it. They should be able to challenge because it's not contracted but you can get into a sticky situation so think they think I'm not going to approach that!

I know people who have asked the health and safety assessor to tell their line managers that they need to work from home because of this, this and this, so it gets them out of having that difficult conversation with their line manager.

Some people are quite scared to approach their line manager about working from home. I think it's different across the organisation it depends on the team and the line managers.

I think we've shifted by not wholly, we haven't brought the whole organisation into that mind set and I think there is gaps, what homeworking should look like, how do you manage staff, how do you have the difficult conversations where you do want someone to come in for example and what does that mean for that one day they have been asked to come in. Those are nuances where you can't really be prescriptive.

Managers should manage their business in the way they feel they ought to but I'm convinced there is a gap.

I welcome homeworking I think it's for people with children and things like that, and even if they haven't got childcare issues its gets you out of the office to focus on other stuff that you can't get done in the office like writing reports and things like that.

I have friends of my age who are now becoming carers so I think there will be an increasing demand for home working for caring responsibilities for elderly relatives, and I think that's going to see a potential increase in requests over the next few years across all grades because of the age profile of the organisation.

Without guidance people may not even ask for home working because they don't know how to because of the lack of guidance and there is no clarity.

Interview Schedules

Interview Schedule Managers

Welcome to this interview and thank you for agreeing to take part.

My name is Judith Marshall-Camm and I am conducting research as a PhD student in the Organisational Health and Wellbeing programme at Lancaster University. I am also the Deputy HR Director heading up the HR Policy Division here in the Department.

Before we start I'll just give you a bit of background to what this study is about.

Organisations are increasingly introducing homeworking policies and I am interested in how this impacts upon managers and staff. Thus, the aim of this study is to advance practical understanding in how homeworking impacts upon all staff and to identify policies, processes or support that may be valued by staff involved in organisational homeworking initiatives.

This is an area I have a particular interest in and I am very keen to hear your views and get your input into this study.

Before we begin it would be good to hear a bit about you in terms of the work of your team and a brief description of your own personal circumstances for instance if you yourself have any caring responsibilities. It would also be helpful if you could give an indication of the age band you fall into [show sheet with age bands as used in the Annual Employee Survey].

Thank you that is very helpful, now I'll move on to the specific questions.

1. How many of your team have homeworking arrangements?
 - Probe who i.e. what grades, job types or carers.
2. If you receive a request for homeworking how do you decide whether to agree to it?
 - Sort of things you might base it on are personality/personal characteristics of the individual
 - Work related issues – visibility, ability to do the job from home, grade of individual
3. Have you ever refused a request to work from home? And if so why was that?
 - Probe why they might have had to say no, was the request unreasonable and if so against what criteria.
4. What is the organisation's policy on working from home?
 - Probe detail of how they received the information, the level of knowledge, views on quality and quantity of information.
5. What do you know about the initiative to encourage more people to work from home?
6. How do you feel about the organisation encouraging more homeworking?
 - Probe how they feel this affects them as a manager (problems) e.g. removed their power (gatekeeper).
 - Feel exposed when saying no or unable to say no.
7. How do you feel about your staff homeworking?

Probe whether they are supportive or does it cause problems.
8. Have you encountered any problems with your staff homeworking e.g. not being contactable or available for duties such as meetings?

9. How do you keep in touch with your team members when they are working at home?

- Are people generally easily contactable when working at home?

Probe views on sufficiency and efficacy of keeping in touch arrangements

10. Do you think either homeworking or not homeworking can affect career progression?

11. Do you do any homeworking?

We have now reached the end of the interview questions but before we finish I would like to ask whether you have any other points or comments you want to make which haven't been covered so far?

Thank you for your time.

Interview Schedule Homeworkers

Welcome to this interview and thank you for agreeing to take part.

My name is Judith Marshall-Camm and I am conducting research as a PhD student in the Organisational Health and Wellbeing programme at Lancaster University. I am also the Deputy HR Director heading up the HR Policy Division here in the Department.

Before we start I'll just give you a bit of background to what this study is about.

Organisations are increasingly introducing homeworking policies and I am interested in how this impacts upon managers and staff. Thus, the aim of this study is to advance practical understanding in how homeworking impacts upon all staff and to identify policies, processes or support that may be valued by staff involved in organisational homeworking initiatives.

This is an area I have a particular interest in and I am very keen to hear your views and get your input into this study.

Before we begin it would be good to hear a bit about you in terms of the work you are currently doing and a brief description of your personal circumstances for instance if you have any caring responsibilities. It would also be helpful if you could give an indication of the age band you fall into [show sheet with age bands as used in the Annual Employee Survey].

Thank you that is very helpful, now I'll move on to the specific questions.

1. How often do you work from home?
2. Is it a regular pattern?
3. What does your manager feel about homeworking?

- Probe were they supportive, any difficulties in getting homeworking agreed, if so what were the objections?

4. Why do you work from home?

- Probe detail of circumstances related to the individual e.g. caring responsibilities, female reasons/male reasons.

5. What do you know about the initiative to encourage more people to work from home?

- Probe detail of how they received the information, the level of knowledge, views on quality and quantity of information.

6. How do you feel about the organisation encouraging more homeworking?

Probe views of how it has affected them and how they view the effect on colleagues.

7. How do you keep in touch with your team when you are working at home?

- Probe views on sufficiency and efficacy of keeping in touch arrangements.

8. How does your manager keep in touch with you?

- As above probe views on sufficiency and efficacy of arrangements.

9. What in your view is best thing about homeworking?

10. Do you think there are any drawbacks to homeworking?

11. Do you think either home working or not homeworking can affect career progression?

We have now reached the end of the interview questions but before we finish I would like to ask whether you have any other points or comments you want to make which haven't been covered so far?

Thank you for your time.

Interview Schedule Non- Homeworkers

Welcome to this interview and thank you for agreeing to take part.

My name is Judith Marshall-Camm and I am conducting research as a PhD student in the Organisational Health and Wellbeing programme at Lancaster University. I am also the Deputy HR Director heading up the HR Policy Division here in the Department.

Before we start I'll just give you a bit of background to what this study is about.

Organisations are increasingly introducing homeworking policies and I am interested in how this impacts upon managers and staff. Thus, the aim of this study is to advance practical understanding in how homeworking impacts upon all staff and to identify policies, processes or support that may be valued by staff involved in organisational homeworking initiatives.

This is an area I have a particular interest in and I am very keen to hear your views and get your input into this study.

Before we begin it would be good to hear a bit about you in terms of the work you are currently doing and a brief description of your personal circumstances for instance if you have any caring responsibilities. It would also be helpful if you could give an indication of the age band you fall into [show sheet with age bands as used in the Annual Employee Survey].

Thank you that is very helpful, now I'll move on to the specific questions.

1. Why don't you do homeworking now?

Probe is it preference or not allowed to?

2. If through preference what is it about homeworking that doesn't suit you?

3. If not allowed to, why and who made the decision?

Probe whether reason was business led or line manager prejudice.

4. If not allowed to how do you feel about being refused the opportunity to work from home?

5. What do you know about the initiative to encourage more people to work from home?

Probe detail of how they received the information, the level of knowledge, views on quality and quantity of information.

6. How do you feel about the organisation encouraging more homeworking?

Probe views of how it has affected them and how they view the effect on colleagues.

7. How do you keep in touch with your team when they are working at home?

8. How do you feel about being in the office when colleagues in the organisation are working from home?

9. Do you think either homeworking or not homeworking can affect career progression?

We have now reached the end of the interview questions but before we finish I would like to ask whether you have any other points or comments you want to make which haven't been covered so far?

Thank you for your time.

Example of a Coded Interview Transcript - NHW File 1

Why don't you do home working now? What's the reason behind it?

1 | There's probably a number of reasons actually, I feel in the role that I
 2 | do that I have a feeling that being based in the business I'm more in
 3 | touch with stakeholders and the type of work that I do there's often a
 4 | number of pressurised deadlines or urgent queries and I feel that if I'm
 5 | based at my desk at the end of my phone and in the building I'm more
 6 | easily accessible. | Commented [MJ1]: More in touch with stakeholders
 7 | That might not necessarily be true but I certainly feel that if I'm here
 8 | and I'm sat next to my line manager I can quickly get through work
 9 | which I might not necessarily do by constantly ringing her or sending
 10 | her lots of e-mails so it's the fact that I'm physically here in the building
 11 | at my desk that people know where to find me and I feel that issues get
 12 | dealt with more quickly. | Commented [MJ2]: Work gets done quicker in office
 13 | | Commented [MJ3]: I'm more accessible
 14 | I can run up and down and find the necessary colleagues to help me
 15 | with that issue and in particular because I deal with a lot of the senior
 16 | management team and they quite frequently are based in the office
 17 | rather than working from home, with the exceptions of Friday's
 18 | perhaps, if they're here it's just a lot easier to walk over to their desk
 19 | and find them and process issues more quickly than perhaps I could do
 20 | at home. | Commented [MJ4]: Ringing/e-mailing manager slower
 21 | | Commented [MJ5]: Easier to run and find people
 22 | The second reason is due to I suppose the environment in my flat I
 23 | don't think it's particularly conducive to working from home but then
 24 | again I've never tried it so I don't know, a lot of this could just be my
 25 | preconceptions about working from home and how successful that
 26 | would be but I've got quite a small flat, internet's not great and I just in
 27 | my head can picture trying to get the laptop working and it failing and
 28 | perhaps feeling like I can't move from the desk just in case I'm away
 29 | from my phone and it goes off and people think you're not working. | Commented [MJ6]: Need to be near senior people
 30 | | Commented [MJ7]: Home env' not conducive
 31 | | Commented [MJ8]: Size of property
 32 | | Commented [MJ9]: Poor home internet
 33 | | Commented [MJ10]: Can't move must answer phone

28 | There's a number of reasons, I just think, you know, it's easier for me.
29 | My commute isn't that bad at all, I'm used to the routine of it, so for me I
30 | just prefer to come into the office.

Commented [MJ1]: Like routine of coming into office

You talked about easy access to other people but what about other people who work from home is that an issue for you because you can't see them?

31 | Not always, I think it depends on the individual and erm on the whole I
32 | would say those who work from home, I can get in touch with and it's
33 | fine. | think in my previous job it was a real problem working in
34 | Ministerial offices because they often wanted officials to pop up within
35 | about 5 or 10 minutes and they just couldn't do that, I couldn't get hold
36 | of them and it became really critical for things like Parliamentary work
37 | on the morning of like Transport questions when you can't get hold of
38 | people, that was a real problem and it was because a lot of people
39 | were out of the office. | So in this job maybe it's not as much of a
40 | problem, I think a lot of people are very reliable, you can get hold of
41 | them | but I think it's the interaction with people in the office that gets the
42 | job done quite quickly. I don't have to phone them or e-mail them I can
43 | just nip over, have a quick chat with them and often the work gets done
44 | really quickly that way.

Commented [MJ2]: Easy to get in touch with homeworkers

Commented [MJ3]: Sre manager expectations, expect people in person

Commented [MJ4]: People gen reliable

Commented [MJ5]: Interaction in office work done quicker

What's the opinion of your line manager about you not working from home, is it their expectations of you or just your personal preference?

45 | Interestingly I don't think we've ever had that chat, we've never
46 | discussed that and I'm not sure whether it's because my line manager
47 | doesn't want to raise it because she's quite keen for me to be here or
48 | it's really she feels if I had a strong preference I would have raised it by
49 | now and she would accommodate that. | do feel that in the type of role
50 | that I do particularly because she's away in meetings often off-site or
51 | working from home herself it is easier to have someone in the office
52 | just in case there's an emergency, you know, that sort of thing.

Commented [MJ6]: Reluctant to discuss as easier if staff don't do it

Commented [MJ7]: Need to be here when Director away

53 | think because I haven't expressed a strong preference to do that, to
54 work from home that she's not really raised it. **so it's working fine at the**
55 **moment because I don't have that desire to do it but yes I think all**
56 **round the sense is because we are working for the Director's office that**
57 **it's really a good thing for me to be here and to be present just in case.**

Commented [MJ1]: Wait until subject raised

Commented [MJ2]: Need to be here when Director away

So you feel that's an expectation?

58 | It's never been discussed so I could only be assuming that and
59 because I haven't you know, I don't have the strong desire to do it, I
60 haven't pursued that so it's never been discussed **but I do know that**
61 **she promotes it more widely in the Directorate and it's good to come**
62 **somewhere where you can actually see there are a lot of people who**
63 **take advantage of it and it makes sense, and really the Directorate we**
64 **work in we should be trailblazers of that approach, working from home**
65 **so it's encourage but between me and my line manager I don't think**
66 **we've ever had that discussion.**

Commented [MJ3]: Reluctant to discuss

Commented [MJ4]: LM promotes HW, lots of team do it

In terms of the initiative expecting people to work from home in this organisation, what's your awareness of it, what do you know about it?

67 | know that there is quite a big push around when we introduced the
68 new ways of working for obvious reasons because of we were going to
69 be quite stuck if we all turn up, so there was a big push on that, **but I**
70 **don't know whether it's because I don't have the desire to do it that I**
71 **wasn't really paying much attention to it but I don't know much about it.**
72 You know I haven't seen any case studies or any examples. **You know,**
73 **does this work for people in practice, what some of the pitfalls of doing**
74 **it and so I haven't really seen much on it. I would know where to go to**
75 **do things like get the laptop sorted and get that in place I've had people**
76 **from the administration team approach me and say if you do want to do**
77 **it we do have laptops available, we can set you up, so I know where to**
78 **go but it's not really clear what the benefits are or policy to be honest.**

Commented [MJ5]: Through working differently

Commented [MJ6]: Not much knowledge, not interested

Commented [MJ7]: Suggestion, case studies

Commented [MJ8]: Know of it available

Commented [MJ9]: Don't know what the benefits are

How did you get your information at the start when you said you were aware of a big push, was it written or verbal?

79 | think for me it was written, it was all the comms on the intranet, on the
80 | internal TV screens | don't recall much more than that, there probably
81 | would have been something from the centre but I think it was all written
82 | and it was tied in with the fact that we are rolling out new ways of
83 | working. These are the new desk, the new thin clients and oh by the
84 | way please consider if you work from home please continue to do so
85 | if you don't here's an idea for you. It's presented in that sort of way so I
86 | wasn't really too aware of it at that time, I didn't know many people who
87 | did that, but that could just be the team that I was working in at the
88 | time.

Commented [MJ1]: Intranet

Commented [MJ2]: TV screens

Commented [MJ3]: Not much info.

Commented [MJ4]: Know of it through working differently

Commented [MJ5]: Didn't know many people doing it

So how do you feel about the organisation expecting home working?

89 | There's pros and cons I can definitely see that as part of a modern
90 | workforce you need to be flexible and allow people the opportunity to
91 | work from home, and I do think it has its benefits. I did notice in the
92 | comms something along the lines of people are more productive
93 | actually working from home. I'm not too sure if that is the case but you
94 | know it's been shown that you can get through a lot of work at home.
95 | It'd certainly be quieter, I think I would get through a lot more stuff but
96 | I'm not sure in the long run whether, it's difficult to know whether you
97 | can continue good levels of activity within your team if a number of
98 | people are working from home because you miss out on that team work
99 | where everyone's in the office together work gets pushed through more
100 | quickly, everyone's available so for me I feel that would be a bit of a
101 | downside because if everyone were to up and leave, different people
102 | on different days, I would feel that I'm approaching someone else in the
103 | team to take forward a piece of work for the person who's at home

Commented [MJ6]: Modern workforce needs to be flexible

Commented [MJ7]: Goodwill and productivity from being allowed to work at home

Commented [MJ8]: Quieter/get a lot done

Commented [MJ9]: Isolation/miss out on team work

104 perhaps. I depends on the nature of the work but it would make life
105 slightly more difficult I think if a lot of people took it up.

Commented [MJ1]: Work gets done quicker in the office

Do you feel the expectation that you should work from home or is it that plenty of others are doing it so you don't need to?

106 I think it's the latter, it's ok because there are lots of other people doing
107 it in roles where you know you can do that successfully so I don't feel
108 that there's any urgency for me to consider it, and I do think it's down to
109 personal preference. If you feel that you can work from home it makes
110 sense but equally if it got to a critical point where everyone in the
111 building has to consider that, it might have to be that one day a week I
112 do it. But, it would be difficult to know which day of the week to do it on
113 because on Friday's which would be the natural assumption, oh it's a
114 bit quieter my line manager works from home herself so it would be a
115 bit difficult. We could still get the job done and I could still contact her
116 and we could have our updates but I think from her perspective she
117 would feel a bit calmer if I was in the office and present.

Commented [MJ2]: Others do it so I don't need to

Commented [MJ3]: Personal preference

Commented [MJ4]: Only if forced to

Commented [MJ5]: Co-ord' patterns with LM

How do you keep in touch with your team?

118 Primarily through e-mails that's the main way. Usually I'm forwarding on
119 pieces of work via e-mail so there's no reason if they were working from
120 home that they couldn't pick that up. A lot of them often, if they are
121 working from home, and I need to speak to them will make themselves
122 available so I know I can contact them. So it hasn't really been a big
123 issue, but yes as I say primarily contact is over e-mail however there
124 are numerous occasions throughout the day where certain things crop
125 up and it's just really handy to just go over to the person in the office
126 and talk it through and get it done in a couple of minutes. You can have
127 a better chat off line than you can perhaps putting it all down in e-mail
128 or trying to get hold of them over the phone, it's easier to talk face to
129 face.

Commented [MJ6]: E-mails

Commented [MJ7]: Phone

Commented [MJ8]: Not as good as face to face

How do you feel about being in the office when other colleagues in the office are working from home?

130 It doesn't bother me in the sense that I'm thinking oh well it's alright for
131 them they didn't have to get on the tube this morning, I don't have any
132 resentment, I think if that works for them I'm really pleased because it
133 just makes sense otherwise there would be overcrowding in the office
134 and clearly that's not tenable so it doesn't make me feel as if they're not
135 working or unavailable because it hasn't been a problem in our team. If
136 I have needed to get hold of someone I've been able to albeit that I
137 might have to wait a bit longer to get a response from them because
138 they're not here in person. But no, I don't resent the fact that they work
139 from home and I don't. It works in my favour because if they're at home
140 then I can be here!

Commented [MJ1]: Don't resent it

Commented [MJ2]: Pleased/not overcrowded

Commented [MJ3]: Longer to get hold of people

Commented [MJ4]: Pleased they are home so I can be here

Do you think either homeworking or not home working can affect career progression?

141 It obviously shouldn't but I think that in some areas in particular with
142 more senior managers who aren't quite behind the new ways of
143 working programme or sort of modernising the workplace they might
144 feel that if you're not visible, you're not seen and sort of out of sight out
145 mind almost which is entirely wrong. If someone is still working from
146 home and is still just as productive if not more so, but there could be
147 perception in certain circles that that's the case (affect career
148 progression). I know that in Ministerial private office I don't think people
149 could get their head around well where are they? They're at home, well
150 why aren't they here, we need them to come over to the house in 10
151 minutes. There was no sort of recognition that that might be their work
152 pattern, they're still contactable they just can't be here in person. So I
153 think certainly in senior circles there might be that attitude.

Commented [MJ5]: Sr mgs expect visibility, don't support HW

Commented [MJ6]: Slacking

Commented [MJ7]: Expectations of employees being in office

Any other comments?

154 | am open to it but perhaps in a different role, it all depends on what
155 you're doing and how visible you need to be cos I do think that might be
156 a problem for certain roles. But on the whole looking at my team I think
157 it works really well, the people who do work from home, you know there
158 hasn't been any issues. | think the only issues they have are around the
159 IT system and getting logged on and having connection, if we could
160 make sure that was a bit better I'm sure more people would take it up.
161 That's the only negative feedback I've heard. The IT might be putting
162 some people off so if that can be improved and perhaps some more
163 comms about case studies of people who do it successfully, to
164 encourage others to give it a go cos until you try it you don't really know
165 what it's going to be like for you. If you've got some expectation, other
166 people are doing it and they give good reviews you might be more
167 encouraged to try it.

Commented [M1]: Need to be visible

Commented [M2]: Poor IT connection

Commented [M3]: Suggestion, case studies

NB. Colours are used to differentiate between coded sections, colours used have no significance.

Thematic Analysis

1. KNOWLEDGE OF THE HOMEWORKING REQUIREMENT

- 1 Low level of knowledge
 - 1 Don't know what benefits are
 - 2 Not much knowledge
 - 3 Not much knowledge because not interested in doing it
 - 4 Didn't know many people doing it
- 2 Some knowledge - sources
 - 1 Know of it through working differently
 - 2 Know of it because others do it
 - 3 Not enough desks/space
 - 4 All about working differently – not enough desks
 - 5 Know of IT available
 - 6 Fed up of hearing about it
- 3 High level of knowledge
 - 1 Enshrined in philosophy – obvious
 - 2 Suggestions
 - 1 Case studies would have been good

- 2 Tips would be good
- 3 Comms' said people would be more productive
- 4 Mixed messages
 - 1 Organisation says do it but manager says no
 - 2 Organisation says do it but lack of IT
 - 3 Pressure to do
 - 4 No pressure to do it
 - 5 Organisation is:
 - 1 requiring it
 - 2 letting us do it
 - 3 encouraging not requiring it
- 5 Office environment
 - 1 All about space reduction
 - 2 New office environment

2. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- 1 Written sources
 - 1 Intranet
 - 2 Weekly bulletins
 - 3 E-mails
 - 4 Line manager guidance
 - 5 Senior staff messages
 - 6 TV Screens
- 2 Verbal messages
 - 1 Staff networks
 - 2 Colleagues
 - 3 Group/team discussions
- 3 Amount of information
 - 1 Lots of information
 - 2 Not much information
 - 3 Not seen the policy

3. PATTERNS AND TYPES OF WORK AND GRADES

- 1 Types of work that can be done at home
 - 1 Policy development
 - 2 Set project
 - 3 Needs peace and quiet
 - 4 Doesn't require IT
 - 5 Technical expert
 - 6 Meeting minutes
 - 7 Report writing
 - 8 Normal working at/from home

- 2 Types of work that needs to be done in the office
 - 1 Pressurised deadlines
 - 2 Urgent queries
 - 3 Need to be near senior staff
 - 4 Need to be near all staff/team
 - 5 Physical activities e.g. handing out equipment

- 3 Frequency of homeworking/patterns
 - 1 One day a week
 - 2 More than one day a week
 - 3 Every other week/less

- 4 Permanent

- 5 Weekends

- 4 Grades of staff that do it
 - 1 Middle managers

 - 2 All grades

4. COMMUNICATIONS

- 1 Methods
 - 1 E-mails
 - 2 Phone
 - 3 Conference calls
 - 4 Video conferencing
 - 5 Lync
 - 6 Not as good as face to face chat
 - 7 HWs use NHWs to contact people in the office
 - 8 Importance of team meetings
- 2 Issues around contacting homeworkers
 - 1 Reluctance
 - 1 People think twice before calling a homeworker
 - 2 Line manager/others not comfortable calling homeworker
 - 2 Ease or not of contacting homeworkers
 - 1 Hard to contact homeworkers
 - 2 Senior managers expectations – expect people to be available in person
 - 3 Easy to get in touch with homeworkers
 - 4 People generally reliable

- 5 Problem with staff slow at calling back
 - 6 Make clear HWs have periods of non-availability
 - 7 expected to be immediately available but not so in office
- 3 Calendars as important tool
- 1 Calendar should say
 - 2 People should check calendars
 - 3 In Outlook location no longer relevant as long as 'Green'

5. IMPACT ON STAFF REMAINING IN THE OFFICE

1 Negative impacts

1 Work related

- 1 Longer to get hold of people
- 2 Some work doesn't get done
- 3 Can't do face to face
- 4 Increased workload of NHWs
- 5 Become go to person
- 6 Use person in office to do work of person at home

2 Suspicion and resentment

- 1 Suspicious of homeworkers
- 2 Resentment
- 3 People taking advantage/slacking

3 Office in constant state of flux

- 1 New neighbours unsettling
- 2 Don't sit with team
- 3 Can't find people

4 Isolation

2 Positives

- 1 Getting a seat/not overcrowded

2 Pleased they are at home so I can be here

3 Other comments

1 Don't resent it

2 Not bothered

3 Need flexibility for homeworkers

4 Accept it because of grade

6. WHY STAFF WORK AT HOME

- 1 Work-life balance
 - 1 Health – wellbeing
 - 2 Deliveries
 - 3 No travel time commuting
 - 4 Lie-in
 - 5 Domestic tasks
 - 6 Good for medical appointments/issues
- 2 Caring responsibilities
 - 1 Good for childcare
 - 1 Reduce costs
 - 2 More time with children
 - 3 Provide care
 - 2 Caring for elders
- 3 Work
 - 1 Quieter at home
 - 2 Get a lot of work done
 - 3 Quiet time
- 4 Other reasons
 - 1 Industrial action

- 2 Bad weather
- 3 Help with lack of desks
- 4 Positive technology

7. WHY STAFF DON'T WORK AT HOME

1 Negatives of working at home

1 Home environment factors

- 1 Home environment not very conducive to homeworking
- 2 Other family members
- 3 Distractions at home
- 4 Size of property
- 5 Poor home internet
- 6 Cost to individual

2 Social factors

1 Isolation

- 1 Like social aspect of the office
- 2 Miss out on teamwork

2 Negatives views of others

- 1 Stigma, viewed as shirking
- 2 Colleagues may be shirking

3 Personality factors

- 1 Lack of self-discipline
- 2 Value segregation of home and office
- 3 Like routine of coming into office

- 4 Central London is a privilege
- 3 Fear
 - 1 People might think I'm not working
 - 2 Can't move must answer phone
 - 3 Afraid of losing papers
 - 4 Fear of not having enough work to do
 - 5 fear of breaking working time directive
 - 6 Nervous of doing it
- 4 Technology
 - 1 Negatives of IT
 - 1 Dislike of laptops
 - 2 Not enough laptops
 - 3 Poor IT connections, hard and unreliable
 - 4 Positives of IT
 - 1 Good IT, danger of not switching off from work
 - 2 Access to IT system is too handy
- 2 **Positives of being in the office**
 - 1 More in touch with stakeholders
 - 2 Ability to sit anywhere in the office
 - 3 Commute is easy into office

- 4 Accessibility
 - 1 Other people are more accessible in the building
 - 2 I'm more accessible in the building

- 5 Work gets done quicker in office
 - 1 Get more done when everyone in
 - 2 Ringing my line manager less effective/slower
 - 3 E-mailing line manager less effective/slower
 - 4 Easier to run and find people
 - 5 Interaction in the office, works get done quicker
 - 6 Can read body language

3 Restricted by work factors/role and expectations

- 1 Need to be here when Director away
- 2 Expected to be here
- 3 Need to be visible
- 4 I can't be away if others are
- 5 Senior managers out of Friday
- 6 My grade
- 7 Line manager assumptions about role

4 Other factors

- 1 Discrimination, not allowed to

8. EMPLOYEES PERCEPTIONS OF HOMEWORKING

1 Grades

- 1 Easier for higher grades
- 2 Only for senior people
- 3 Co-ordinating patterns with line manager
- 4 Grade is relevant

2 Consistency

- 1 Patchy across organisation
- 2 Unfairness
- 3 Needs a process not just the manager
- 4 Should be available for all
- 5 Plenty of others doing it so I want to
- 6 No change management/buy-in

3 Perceptions of change to a requirement

- 1 Cynicism
 - 1 Essential others do it
 - 1 No need for me to do it
 - 2 Happy for others to do it
 - 3 Plenty of others do it so I don't need to
 - 2 Only do it if forced to

- 3 Personal preference
 - 4 Opposition
 - 5 Only if it suited me
 - 6 Making office unpleasant to encourage it
- 2 Positive/neutral views
- 1 Gone from a perk to a right
 - 2 Feels like a privilege
 - 3 Used to be about fixed days, now more flexible
 - 4 Modern workforce needs to be flexible
 - 5 Never done it but would like to
 - 6 Goodwill and productivity from being allowed to work flexibly
 - 7 Needs balance of homeworking and office working
 - 8 Apathy, not got around to doing it

9. THE ROLE OF THE MANAGER IN THE HOMEWORKING INITIATIVE

1 Decision making

- 1 Power eroded
 - 1 Rarely disagree/always agree
 - 2 Never refused a request
 - 3 No power to get staff to come into office

- 4 Employee out of Friday so I have to come in
- 5 Easy to say yes
- 6 Can't say no as the organisation requires it
- 7 LM can't say no now the organisation requires it
- 2 LM power not eroded
 - 1 Should be my decision
 - 2 Expect homeworkers to fit around the job/team
 - 3 Requests refused
 - 4 Acceptable limit
- 3 Avoidance of issue
 - 1 Reluctant to discuss as easier if staff don't do it
 - 2 Wait until subject is raised

2 Factors affecting decision making and scope for homeworking

- 1 Capacity for homeworking
 - 1 Regular on-site meetings
 - 2 Effect off interims and contractors

3 Other issues

- 1 Presenteeism
 - 1 Manage by results versus presenteeism
 - 2 LM supportive based on output

- 2 Trust
 - 1 LM is trusting
 - 2 Lack of trust from LM
 - 3 Homeworking works for LM but not others

4 Employees views of their line manager

- 1 Supportive
 - 1 LM promotes homeworking, lot of team do it
 - 2 LM supportive
 - 3 LM flexible
 - 4 LM supportive specifically because they do it
 - 5 Effect of LM role, away a lot so I can't do it
 - 6 Easy to get agreement
- 2 Unsupportive
 - 1 LM challenging
 - 2 LM unsupportive
 - 3 LM makes assumptions
- 5 LMs who don't do it are less supportive

10. IMPACT ON CAREER PROGRESSION

1 Homeworking does impact on career progression

- 1 Need/want to be visible
- 2 Junior grades need help
- 3 Rules you out of some roles
- 4 Does if you are inflexible
- 5 Feel expected to work longer at home to aid career
- 6 Perception of slacking
 - 1 Viewed as part timer
 - 2 Lack of availability causes frustration
- 7 Visibility
 - 1 Out of sight out of mind
 - 2 More in the know in the office
- 8 Old fashioned attitudes
 - 1 Snr managers expect visibility, don't support HW
 - 2 Presenteeism
 - 3 Expectations of employees being in the office

2 Homeworking doesn't impact on career progression

- 1 Don't believe it does, old fashioned to favour some working patterns

- 2 OK if confident and don't need others help/input with career
- 3 No as long as you are flexible
- 4 Only if you are underperformer

3 Homeworking may impact on career progression

- 1 It shouldn't
 - 2 Depends on who you are trying to impress
 - 3 Yes and no
 - 4 Maybe, monitor it
 - 5 Depends on attitude of LM, supportive or not of HW
 - 6 Works both ways
- 1 Can be criticised for being in
 - 2 can be criticised for being out

4 Gender

It's an accommodation for Mums

Example of Coded Material from Interviews Assembled into Theme and Sub-theme

THEME 5

IMPACT ON STAFF REMAINING IN THE OFFICE

1 NEGATIVE IMPACTS

1 Work Related

Who	Line	Comment	Code
NHW1	136- 138	If I have needed to get hold of someone I've been able to albeit that I might have to wait a bit longer to get a response from them because they're not here in person.	Longer to get hold of people
NHW2	43- 45	It can increase your workload because you're the one whose there, you're the face of the team so people will naturally come and seek you out. I find people come to me rather than contacting other members of the team,	Use person in office rather than HW
NHW2	46- 47	I like to help people so it doesn't cause me any problems it can sometimes pull you in more than one direction but you cope with that.	Increased workload of NHWs
NHW3	144- 148	but on the other hand, I know that if something can't be achieved because somebody isn't physically there	Some work doesn't get done

		then that's just the way it is and it's nothing to get upset about. I do what I can and I understand that my colleagues know that I'll do what I can and it won't be.....I like to think that we plan far enough ahead to ensure problems of that nature won't arise. Fine, fine absolutely.	
NHW4	102-103	But there are other people that they could go to but sometimes they like to just go to that one person.	Become go to person
NHW6	76-80	And the fact that others may not be there is obviously a difficulty if you want to have a face to face meeting with them or something but in terms of how I feel about being here when I'm surrounded perhaps on a particular day by a lot off empty desks, I don't think that makes a lot of difference.	Can't do face to face
NHW6	81-85	Sometimes I become the go to person, but I think there's a tendency for that to happen anyway. In the kind of work I do if I....I've found sometimes that if I've sorted out a problem for somebody in an area that's relevant to me they will come up to me with all sorts of wild and wonderful thing that they want me to sort out for them.	Increased workload of NHWs
NHW6	86-87	You do obviously get enquiries from people, is so and so in, or do you know anything about.....x which is obviously going to happen	Increased workload of NHWs

NHW6	100-101	and they reckon that other parts of the organisation will be here all the time, and they can just go to whoever it is and they will be there all the time as a backup.	Become go to person
NHW7	135-138	Well, I feel pressured, I feel pressured and stressed sometimes so I've decided to tell people come back later or send me an e-mail, you know, put your request in an e-mail and send it to me. Because when they come to me like that it's not always clear what they want me to do, so put it in an e-mail and send it to me.	Increased workload of NHWs
NHW7	139-140	They come to me because they can see me, because I am there so they come to me.	Become go to person
NHW7	148-151	When I am in the office I am the go to person, they won't contact the people working from home, sometimes I have a request to my DMs and I'm copied in, in case they're not there I should deal with it, if they are at home I should deal with it.	Become go to person
NHW8	88-92	The reverse side of the visibility thing is I see people still now wandering round or coming to me or a whole group of us and saying where is this person and you go 'don't know, did you look in their calendar?' And they say things like 'I sent them an appointment for next	Become go to person

		Monday and I don't know if they're going to come or not' and you're thinking why are you asking us!	
NHW8	142-147	So, I don't think there are any barriers for me I think that not everybody in the organisation has moved with the culture and will just stand next to somebody that vaguely sits near the and ask about a person like what's happening in their life or expect you to look up on their calendar because you're near their team. So, it hasn't quite got there yet and that kind of thing can disrupt not just one person but a whole load of people.	Become go to person
NHW8	148-149	They stand in the middle of the floor and go 'do you know if they're coming to a meeting on Monday?'	Become go to person
NHW8	172-177	Even when everyone is in the office I just happen to have one of those faces that people will come and stand by my desk and say what's happening with so and so. People ask me in the street for directions but you know, I don't mind in general, most of the time its fine I think it's quite disruptive to work. And as I said not just for one person because people will come and do that but we are so far into it, it's become the norm.	Become go to person
NHW Group	87-90	and that might not be too bad if you are part of their team but if you are from elsewhere in the business it then happens that they turn up at somebody else's	Become go to person

		desk and say "I'm trying to get hold of X, where are they?" Then you have to say I don't know, have you looked in their calendar.	
NHW Group	181-182	Yesterday there wasn't many people around and people will come over to you and say 'do you know this'	Become go to person
NHW Group	185-186	You can get lumbered with everything if you're the only person in the office but on the other hand it gives you the opportunity to raise your profile.	Become go to person
NHW Group	190	I think it affects people differently depending on their role and position in the organisation for example, X is a senior manager and she isn't in on a Friday and although we all know she is working it can still be frustrating that she isn't in the office.	Longer to get hold of people
NHW Group	201-205	I do feel an increase in my workload when a colleague is working from home. All the physical stuff in the office tends to come to me rather than being shared across the team. People see me and know I am a member of that team so they give it to me to deal with and of course you're never likely to say I'm not doing it are you.	Increased workload of NHWs
HW1	151-156	I think that within my team I do, and I can appreciate colleagues who have said that out of five of us four home work so someone out most days or work part	Become go to person

		<p>days and I have heard from one of my colleagues who is generally in the office five days a week, have said that there is a tendency for people to come to her because colleagues have seen absent chairs they tend to come to her for the queries and the questions.</p>	
HW1	158-159	<p>therefore let's just go to the one individual we can see. Sometimes then that individual feels a bit put upon and I can understand that</p>	<p>Become got to person/Increased workload of NHWs</p>
HW1	160-164	<p>I'm sure that must be replicated and not unique to them, replicated across the organisation. So I think that is a drawback, someone just ends up being landed with all the queries and questions so there might be a little bit of resentment potentially. Because we are all human beings and we are all stretched and have a lot on.</p>	<p>Increased workload of NHWs</p>
HW2	96-98	<p>Yes, that's fine. I know sometimes when the machine's not working then you have to ring up another colleague you know and ask them to look up a phone number.</p>	<p>Increased workload of NHWs</p>
HW Group	79-85	<p>Can I just add, thinking about my team I work in, and out of the five of us, four of us work from home on different days so for the one individual present in the office, they are the one person people tend to go to if</p>	<p>Become go to person</p>

		<p>it's a query because others are not physically in the office there's a tendency for that individual to be the one everybody goes to, and I think that can be a bit unfair. Rather than e-mail others who are not physically there one person gets all the queries I think they can have a tendency to feel a bit tetchy about that.</p>	
HW Group		<p>I recognise that kind of scenario but I see it the other way, I use this example, people wouldn't normally show up at your house without contacting you in advance to see if you will be there, so I think we need to move away from that culture where people expect you to be sat there in a specific place and accessible without giving you any pre-warning.</p>	<p>Increased workload of NHWs</p>
HW Group	91-97	<p>I think there's a behavioural issue as regards the person expecting you to be there so I don't think we should be too concerned personally about people coming up to you. I think there's an issue about people saying why always me but I go back to the fact that there's so many ways in which people can be contacted, there's e-mail, phones, or of it's a meeting there's teleconferencing, there's quite a wide range so I think people need to be a bit less old school in the way in which they think about that.</p>	<p>Use person in office to do work of person at home</p>

HW Group	98-102	But, there's kind of a mixture because one the one hand there's been a message around don't just work in your silo, get up and walk to see the person, so you follow that and get up and go and see that individual don't just e-mail! So, it's all about balance having those same messages, yes get up and walk and talk but if they are not there then try contacting them another way. Become got to person	Become go to person
Mgr3	137-141	They are again, the notion of working differently is that it shouldn't be a great issue if you go and sit somewhere different. However, we are finding that there is a certain culture that people, as pressure on desks increases, become less welcoming shall we say about people from other areas even if they are in the same wider team coming sitting with them.	Office in constant state of flux/new neighbours unsettling

2 Suspicion and Resentment

Who	Line	Comment	Code
NHW4	110- 111	I'm alright about it, it's just that it makes me wonder have they got enough work to be doing it specially my grade. Are they working from home? What are they doing if they haven't got enough work to do?	Suspicious of HWs
NHW5	85- 90	The downside, but I'm going to qualify it, the downside is that you have no real perception if your colleague working from home is on the telephone, you simply get the voicemail message, and I have to say, which is an unkind thought, you know you think maybe they're out in the garden, they haven't heard the telephone but invariably, which you know is not nice but that thought does go through your head.	People taking advantage/slacking
NHW8	93- 96	And then it developed into 'oh yeah, I think they actually might be working from home, or I don't really know what they're doing. It's almost this kind of murmuring about really what the hell do they actually do, we don't really see much of them!	People taking advantage/slacking
NHW9	114- 119	apart from I do think that there are some..... and it is unfortunate that some time some people are using it as a way of not taking annual leave or flexi leave or	People taking advantage/slacking

		<p>something, suddenly they are working from home but you can never get hold of them and so therefore....and they're not online so it goes yellow on the outlook or whatever so then actually are you really working from home?</p>	
NHW9	151-158	<p>I used to be somebody that would be getting e-mails at midnight from lawyers and things like that and responding. I am now less inclined to respond to anything past 4 o'clock now and actually that's not a good way to work, because the work still needs to be done. It's important work so actually he's not helping the situation because I could just respond quite quickly or I will wait until the next day now even though I have a blackberry because it's like well you're not allowing any flexibility but yet you want that from me at whatever hour and things like that so you know it works both ways actually.</p>	Resentment
HW6	226-237	<p>I think the other drawback is I don't know how much in terms of monitoring it, I think it's been good, I don't think people have been too, or I don't feel I have been particularly like eyeballed in terms of when I'm working from home as long as I've got a product at the end of the day. But I know lots of people who will work from home but do nearly sweet nothing which is quite frustrating because that's not</p>	People taking advantage/slacking

		<p>what it's for but I think people do, and it's not a day off, it's just you've chosen to work from home that day and yes practically you might do a few household things that helps take the pressure of at the weekend or whatever but I know people just do sit there and read magazines watching telly and just pick up the phone and send a couple of e-mails and that makes me a bit angry because that's not what it's meant for. I think some people do treat it as a day off. I know people that do and it's all a bit tongue in cheek.</p>	
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3 Office in Constant State of Flux

Who	Line	Comment	Code
NHW2	62- 69	<p>I think its cos the environment constantly changing, you don't know who's going to be sitting with you from one day to the next or how you might need to change your tone to fit with the people working near you for example keeping sensitive stuff, information secure. I feel in constant flux and you don't necessarily know the people that are near you, where they work or who they might be, are they people that you're actually corresponding with on things.</p> <p>You have no idea who they are they might be from other bits of the business or from outside, you just haven't got a clue who they are. It's a bit unsettling.</p>	Office in flux/new neighbours unsettling
NHW6	60- 66	<p>Obviously, they are going to pick that up one way or another. It's a little more complex if people have done that because the other aspect of working it's not just people working at home but people perhaps working in different parts of the building. In the days when everyone had a fixed desk I could look, if somebody said is so and so in today, I would look and over and yes, she is. But now, ask</p>	Can't find people

		if somebody's in, the answer is 'I don't know', because they could be anywhere.	
NHW6	121-129	In terms of finding somewhere to sit I haven't had a problem, because I'm in all the time you would have thought if anybody was getting problems with where they sit it would be me. Although there again it possibly affects people whose normal working day starts around 10 o'clock because they come in a bit later obviously any space is going to be filled up. I've had problems about three times in all the time and once I sat on the fourth floor and once I sat on the second floor, once I had been to the dentist first thing, came in about quarter past 11 and it was quarter to one when I found a desk and that was walking all five floors of the building.	Don't sit with team
NHW7	108-109	New ways of working to me is good but the disadvantages are that you don't really sit with your team anymore and if you don't come early your seat is gone. When it started you could find some people pulling their trollies round and round looking for a place to sit and that is not good.	Don't sit with team
NHW7	127-130	And also, it's very difficult these days to find people because of the new seating arrangements, anybody at all can sit anywhere in the building, yes, very difficult to find people's location is very difficult.	Can't find people

4 Isolation

Who	Line	Comment	Code
NHW3	64- 68	<p>At the moment I'm doing the data cleansing project and basically to do that properly, to feel that I'm doing it properly, to feel that I'm concentrating properly, I have to sit anywhere except within my zone, I can't sit near my colleagues when I'm doing that, I have to go to somewhere where I don't know the people particularly and I feel isolated</p>	Isolation
Mgr4	198- 209	<p>What I'd also like to highlight is one of the things about home working that always strikes me is it is possible that people can become a bit disengaged and isolated from the team, from the organisation and again, one of the things that we do is, have you heard of the Ted talks?</p> <p>We make sure on days when people are working in different locations we still all take out 15 minutes to watch a Ted talk and they can watch it on the laptop at home and then we discuss it afterwards and I just think something as simple as that shows that you are actually engaging people in something because again there's this whole mind set about 'well I'm working from home I shouldn't be doing anything funny or fun and I've got to work'. So we are actually saying</p>	Isolation

		look it is ok to take 15 minutes out of the day to sit there as a team and think.	
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