

Asbestos Policy and Management

The Policy and system for the management of health risks associated with exposure to asbestos in housing premises owned and/or managed by Wiltshire Council. This document outlines the policies and procedures

FOREWORD

This document details the system for the management of health risks associated with exposure to asbestos in properties owned and/or managed by Wiltshire Council. This document outlines the policies and procedures. It has to be used in conjunction with the asbestos register for the premises.

Please read this document and ensure you understand all the issues dealt with. If you have any doubts please contact the Head of Housing Management on 01722 434351 for advice or further information.

This document is produced by Wiltshire Council.

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The following records are to be kept in the relevant sections of the document

- Advice received in writing related to asbestos containing materials**
- Method statements for work on asbestos containing materials**
- Risk assessments for work on asbestos containing materials**
- Notifications to the enforcement agency**
- Air monitoring reports**
- Special waste disposal certificates**
- Incident reports**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Wiltshire Council has prepared this asbestos management system for its Housing Premises. This document detail the system for the management of health risks associated with exposure to asbestos in housing properties owned and/or managed by Wiltshire Council in relation to its landlord function.

Asbestos is a naturally occurring fibrous mineral silicate. It was widely used as noise and thermal insulation and as a fire resistant material in buildings because of its physical and chemical properties. It was also used because it was a cheap building material.

Breathing in air containing asbestos dust (fibres) can lead to asbestos related lung diseases. Some diseases such as asbestosis are caused by exposure to high levels of airborne fibres for an extended period. In others such as cancers of the lung, bronchus and cancer of the lung lining (mesothelioma) breathing in more asbestos fibres increases the probability of disease; exposure does not mean that disease will inevitably occur. As a safe threshold for these type of diseases has not been found it is recommended that exposure be kept as low as is possible.

Wherever asbestos containing materials are located, there is a risk of exposure if asbestos fibres are released from asbestos containing materials. Whilst fibre release will occur if asbestos containing materials are disturbed and/or damaged, the level of fibre release is dependant upon the type and extent of the damage and the type and composition of the asbestos containing material. Whilst there is the potential for all occupiers to be exposed, workers engaged in maintenance, repair work etc. are particularly vulnerable to exposure.

1.2 LEGISLATION

This Management system when fully implemented will assist Wiltshire Council in complying with its duties under:

- *The general requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Etc. Act 1974*
- *The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999*
- *The Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2006*
- *The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007*

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 imposes a statutory duty on employers to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all their employees (except domestic servants in private households). This duty also extends to others who may be affected by the employers' undertakings (work activity) e.g. contractors, tenants, neighbours, visitors and members of the public.

The initial requirement of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 is for employers to assess the risk to the health and safety of employees and to anyone else who may be affected by the work activity, so that the necessary preventative and protective steps can be identified. It also requires the employer to make arrangements for putting into practice the health and safety measures that follow from the risk assessment.

The Contract Officer must notify the CDM coordinator if asbestos is present in the property, for any works that fall under the *Construction (Design & Management) Regulations 1994*. Staff and contractors also need to be informed about the presence of asbestos in the property, to avoid inadvertent damage and fibre release.

All work with asbestos containing materials is regulated by the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002 as Amended. The prime objective of these regulations, which are made under the Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1974, is to prevent exposure to asbestos from work activities and where this is not reasonably practicable to reduce exposure as far as is reasonably practicable.

The Health and Safety Executive has produced a number of Approved Codes of Practice and a number of Technical Guidance Notes. Compliance with all relevant regulations and guidance is necessary so that all work involving asbestos containing materials can be carried out safely without any risk to any person.

Zurich Risk Services [a branch of the Council's insurers] expertise is able to assist in:

- Preparing budget estimates for asbestos works.
- The preparation of project specification
- Vetting of potential asbestos removal contractors
- Assessment of tender proposals
- Management and supervision of asbestos removal project
- Clearance and reassurance air monitoring resultant from any such removal works.

2.0 ASBESTOS POLICY

Wiltshire Council is committed to ensuring the health and safety of its tenants, employees, contractors and visitors.

The council is further committed to ensuring that asbestos containing materials will not be used in its properties and those asbestos containing materials that are presently in the Housing Stock will be removed, as and when it is safe and cost effective to do so.

Whilst these asbestos containing materials remain in situ the council will ensure that they are managed in such a manner that the risk to the health of our employees, contractors, tenants and visitors using the premises is minimal.

If asbestos containing materials pose a serious, imminent health risk to persons using the premises then those materials shall be removed as quickly and as safely as possible.

All essential work on asbestos containing materials shall be carried out in accordance to the highest standards of working practice in line with the current legal standard.

This Policy was adopted by The Council on.....

3.0 ORGANISATION

3.1 CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AND HOUSING RESPONSIBILITY

The Corporate Director is responsible to the Cabinet for Wiltshire Council for the implementation of this policy and for ensuring that:

- The Cabinet is made aware of any problems in implementing this policy.

3.2 HOUSING SERVICE DIRECTOR RESPONSIBILITY

The Director of Housing is to ensure compliance with this policy and ensure that best current practice is followed at all times. The Director of Housing is to ensure that Corporate Director is fully informed:

- About the implementation of this policy; and
- Any reports of any asbestos related incidents.

The Director of Housing is to ensure that measures are taken to provide suitable advice, from a competent person, whenever it is required.

3.3 MAINTAINANCE MANAGERS RESPONSIBILITY

The routine management of Asbestos in each of our premises is the responsibility of the Head of Housing Management. The Head of Housing Management is to ensure that he is fully conversant and complies with the asbestos policy at all times. He is to ensure that the staff under his control and that all persons, including contractors, using the premises know of and comply with this policy.

3.4 CONTRACT OFFICERS RESPONSIBILITY

The Contract Officer is to ensure that he is fully conversant and complies with the asbestos policy at all times. He is to ensure that the measures are taken to comply with the law and this policy in all maintenance and construction works. The Contracts Manager will ensure that the asbestos register is kept up to date.

4.0 IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 ASBESTOS SURVEY

The Head of Housing Management is to ensure that an asbestos survey is carried out of all our premises. The survey is to establish the location, form, type and condition of any asbestos containing material with an evaluation of the likelihood of the material being damaged, disturbed or worked on in the future. Priority is to be given to survey all properties built or refurbished between 1960 and 1985 where asbestos was more widely used.

4.2 ASBESTOS REGISTER

The Contracts Manager is to ensure that the findings of the asbestos survey are recorded in an asbestos register for each property. This asbestos register is to be available at the Councils Housing offices and is to be kept up to date at all times. All tenants and contractors are to be informed of the location and presence of the asbestos register.

Where drawings/plans are available, they are to be 'marked up' to show the location of asbestos containing materials. If drawings/plans are available they are to be included in the Asbestos Register.

The Asbestos Register contains an overall risk rating. The risk from the asbestos containing materials is classified as follows:

High: Materials that contain asbestos and are in a condition and/or location that necessitates urgent remedial action. These materials are not normally suitable for containment and removal will normally be required.

Medium: Materials that contain asbestos and are in a condition and/or location where some remedial action is required. These materials

may be suitable for containment e.g. encapsulation but removal in the long-term may be appropriate.

Low: Materials that contain asbestos but are in a condition and/or location which does not give rise to a significant health risk provided it remains undisturbed or undamaged by routine maintenance of regular work activities.

Very Low: This material does not pose a risk under normal conditions provided it is not finely abraded. When this material is removed, it should be removed without cutting or abrading and disposed of as special waste.

The “Risk Assessment Rating” is the risk to the normal users of the property based on the material type, its condition and location, whether it is vulnerable to damage and whether it has been protected or not. This risk assessment is to be updated every time the property or asbestos containing materials are reinspected.

The asbestos register is to be consulted whenever property maintenance, repair, cable/IT installation, alteration or refurbishment works are considered. Contractors are to be informed of the contents of the asbestos register.

The contractors are to sign the log sheet, to be kept with the asbestos registers, whenever the asbestos registers are referred to.

4.3 MARKING OF ASBESTOS CONTAINING MATERIALS

The Head of Housing Management is to ensure that all asbestos containing material are labelled in accordance with the Health And Safety (Signs And Signals) Regulations 1996 unless it is in a public area. The relevant sign to be used is as follows:



With the following notice if the sign is situated on the asbestos containing material

WARNING – ASBESTOS CONTAINING MATERIAL

Or with the following notice if the sign is situated at the entrance to an area in which asbestos containing material is located

**WARNING – AREA CONTAINS ASBESTOS CONTAINING MATERIALS;
SEE ASBESTOS REGISTER FOR FURTHER DETAILS**

4.4 INSPECTION OF ASBESTOS CONTAINING MATERIALS

The Head of Housing Management is to ensure that all asbestos containing material are inspected on in accordance with the Risk Assessments for signs of damage and wear etc. The findings are to be recorded and the register updated.

4.5 WORK INVOLVING ASBESTOS CONTAINING MATERIAL

The Head of Housing Management is to ensure that if asbestos materials are liable to be worked upon or disturbed in any way, advice shall be obtained through the Head of Housing Management before any work is carried out. The Head of Housing Management is to record the advice in writing.

The Head of Housing Management is to ensure that all work on asbestos containing materials is to be carried out in accordance with the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2006, associated approved codes of practice and guidance.

The Head of Housing Management is to ensure that a separate risk assessment must be carried out if any work is to be carried out on any asbestos containing material, taking into account the work process, the methods and equipment being used and the protective measures being taken.

The Head of Housing Management is to ensure that all work on asbestos containing material is to be carried out by a licensed asbestos contractor, unless it is exempted work.

The Head of Housing Management is to ensure that the licensed asbestos contractor produces a plan of work and method statement before carrying out the work and give notice to the appropriate enforcement agency, if required, to allow the work to be carried out. A copy of the plan of work and method statement and notification to the enforcement agency, if required, are to be sent to the Head of Housing Management by fax and post.

The Head of Housing Management is to ensure that the plan of work and method statement is checked in good time to allow the work to be carried out. The Contractor is to be advised in writing whether the method statement is satisfactory or not. If the method statement is not acceptable the licensed asbestos contractor is to be informed and given the opportunity to amend the method statement.

The Head of Housing Management is to take all reasonable measures to ensure that all work carried out is carried out in accordance with the procedures described in the plan of work and method statement.

The Head of Housing Management is to arrange for air monitoring outside the asbestos area during such works and for verification of the contractors clearance testing once the works have been completed.

The Head of Housing Management is to arrange for a competent person to check the quality of all work on asbestos containing materials before the area is accepted back from the asbestos removal contractor.

The Head of Housing Management is to ensure that when asbestos containing materials are removed from the property the asbestos register is updated and that copies of all records are forwarded to the Contract Officer. The Contract Officer is to keep a copy of all records.

4.6 ACTION TO BE TAKEN IF ASBESTOS CONTAINING MATERIAL IS FOUND

When asbestos-containing material is found during the course of any work, except when being carried out by a licensed asbestos contractor, the work is to be immediately stopped until advice has been obtained through the Head of Housing Management. The Head of Housing Management is to record the advice in writing.

The Head of Housing Management is to ensure that Airborne fibre monitoring is immediately carried out to ascertain the airborne fibre levels. Records of all airborne fibre monitoring are to be forwarded to the Contract Officer. The Contract Officer is to keep a copy of all records.

WORK IS NOT TO RESUME UNTIL ADVICE HAS BEEN OBTAINED AND AIR MONITORING HAS BEEN CARRIED OUT.

A written record of the event is to be made and forwarded to the Director of Housing. The Contract Officer shall keep a copy of all records.

4.7 ACTION TO BE TAKEN IF ASBESTOS CONTAINING MATERIAL IS DAMAGED

When asbestos-containing material is damaged, work shall stop until advice has been obtained through the Head of Housing Management. The Head of Housing Management is to record the advice in writing.

If there is a serious risk of fibre release, remedial work is to be undertaken as soon as possible to minimise the risk of fibre release. If remedial work cannot be taken immediately persons shall be excluded from the area and airborne fibre monitoring is to be immediately carried out to ascertain the airborne fibre levels. The Contract Officer shall keep a copy of all records.

WORK IS NOT TO RESUME UNTIL ADVICE HAS BEEN OBTAINED AND AIR MONITORING HAS BEEN CARRIED OUT.

The Head of Housing Management is to ensure that a written record of the event is made, with witness statements, and forwarded to the Director of Housing. The Director of Housing is to inform the Corporate Director and pass the records to the Contract Officer. The Contract Officer shall keep a copy of all records.

4.8 ASBESTOS WASTE

The Head of Housing Management is to ensure that waste contaminated by or containing asbestos is bagged, labelled and disposed of by a licensed contractor in a licensed site as special waste. Copies of all relevant paperwork are to be forwarded to and kept by the Contract Officer.

4.9 INFORMATION TO TENANTS AND CONTRACTORS

It is recognised that this document primarily concerns asbestos in the context of the work environment. The materials have however been used in the construction or repair of dwellings, ie peoples homes, and it is also possible that residents may have introduced them or have otherwise come into contact with them. The Head of Housing Management is to ensure that the information at Appendix 1 is provided to all tenants, prospective purchasers etc on request and to all contractors whenever they visit the property.

4.10 AUDIT AND REVIEW

The Director of Housing is to arrange that the management system is audited every two years.

The Director of Housing and Head of Housing Managements are to review the system at least once a year. If necessary the system is to be amended if required by the findings of the review. The Contract Officer is to record the findings of the annual review.

The Contract Manager is to ensure that asbestos register is updated, as and when remedial work is carried out. In addition, the property asbestos register is to be updated by a rolling re-survey every 5 years.

4.11 INDEPENDANT CONSULTANTS

All asbestos consultancy work is to be provided by our consultants. Our consultants are:-

Zurich Risk Services

The Head of Housing Management is to ensure that best value is obtained from the preferred consultants.

4.12 RECORDS

The Contract Officer is to keep the following records

- A register of all asbestos surveys of premises
- Copies of all advice given to all Housing staff
- Copies of all advice received from the asbestos consultant
- Details of a all work on asbestos containing materials carried out in all premises
- Copies of all incident reports

Records of the following are to be kept in/with the asbestos register

- Record of viewing by Contractors
- Amendments of the asbestos register
- Details of inspections of asbestos containing materials

Records of the following information shall be kept in this document

- All advice received in writing from the Head of Housing Management
- All method statements for work on asbestos containing materials
- All risk assessments for work on asbestos containing materials
- All notifications to the enforcement agency
- All air monitoring reports
- All special waste disposal certificates
- All incident reports
- All audit records

APPENDIX 1

INFORMATION FOR CONTRACTORS

Wiltshire Council have undertaken asbestos surveys and prepared a registers for its housing properties.

The Head of Housing Management, telephone no. 01722 434351 has a copy of the register at 26, Endless Street, Salisbury SP1 1DR. The register can be viewed by contacting the Contract Officer.

It is strongly recommended that you view the asbestos register before the start of work to ensure your activities do not intentionally or otherwise disturb any asbestos containing materials or to ensure suitable arrangements can be implemented.

Please note that we require that the following actions to be taken.

REPAIRS INSPECTORS AND CONTRACT MANAGER

Repairs Inspectors and Contract Managers are to ensure that all their contractors are informed of the presence and location of the asbestos register. They are to advise their contractors to refer to the asbestos register before they carry out any works within the property.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN IF ASBESTOS CONTAINING MATERIAL IS FOUND

- When asbestos-containing material is found during the course of any work the work is to be immediately stopped and the Head of Housing Management informed. We shall ensure that airborne fibre monitoring is carried out to ascertain the airborne fibre levels. Work is not to be resumed until the Director of Housing has taken advice and air monitoring has been carried out. All further work shall be undertaken having regard for the advice provided by the Head of Housing Management.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN IF ASBESTOS CONTAINING MATERIAL IS DAMAGED

- When asbestos-containing material is damaged, during the course of any work the work is to be immediately stopped and the Head of Housing Management informed. He shall ensure that airborne fibre monitoring is carried out to ascertain the airborne fibre levels. Work is not to be resumed until the Director of Housing has taken advice and air monitoring has been carried out. Any further work shall be undertaken having regard for the advice provided by the Head of Housing Management.

WORK INVOLVING ASBESTOS CONTAINING MATERIAL

- All work on asbestos containing materials is to be carried out in accordance with the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002 and associated approved codes of practice, together with their subsequent revisions, updating, or re issue.

INFORMATION TO BE GIVEN TO TENANTS

When requested tenants of council owned premises shall be informed as follows:-

Asbestos and asbestos products were used extensively in the construction, repair and maintenance of all types of buildings for many years and council owned premises were no exception.

All known "raw" asbestos has been removed but several asbestos containing products remain in use. These are mainly asbestos insulating board and asbestos cement both of which mainly contain plaster or cement. They are often found under roof eaves, in garages and sheds, bath panels and around heating appliances. Providing these are in good condition and are not abraded they are doing a good job protecting the building from fire and weather damage.

We do have records of asbestos products used but because these may have been substituted or perhaps been introduced by residents themselves over the years we cannot say for certain if and where they may be in any particular property.

If you rent or purchase council property you will be informed of any information we have about asbestos material in the property, what to do about it and the extent of our responsibility concerning its management and /or removal. If you are aware of any

material, which is in poor condition, or if you are uncertain about any materials please let your landlord know as soon as possible.

All asbestos material will be removed on a rolling basis according to priority. Please do not remove or disturb any material yourself as it could prejudice you and the property.

Please contact the council if you would like any further information.