

About asbestos

This leaflet explains what asbestos is, where it may be found in your home and what you can do to stay safe.





Background

Asbestos was widely used in building materials and many other products, as it is strong and heat resistant.

When asbestos materials age or are damaged they release fibres into the air. If these fibres are inhaled, they can be breathed deep into the lungs, where they may stay for a long time, possibly causing damage. You might have heard about people who worked with asbestos for many years becoming ill. When certain types of these fibres are breathed in, there is a risk of lung diseases including cancer.

Asbestos has been used in the UK for many years, so it is likely that we have all been exposed to very low levels of fibres, but without significant risk to our health. The use of asbestos has been phased out and was banned completely in 1999.

Remember

Even if there is asbestos in your home, it is not usually a serious problem.

Asbestos is only dangerous if it is damaged over time or if it is disturbed by people who are unqualified to work with asbestos.



Asbestos survey in your home

When we undertake major maintenance work, for example replacing your kitchen or bathroom, we will carry out an asbestos survey. We will also do a survey if we find asbestos in your home whilst doing general repairs. We will take samples of the material to be sure that it is asbestos.


We will share the results of the survey with you - telling you what we have found and what action we intend to take. This will ensure that you don't accidentally damage it and that we can work safely in your home.

All the information about the survey will be logged so that we can make assumptions about where asbestos might be found in similar properties. Our contractors will also have access to this information.

What if we find asbestos?

If we find asbestos we will take appropriate action in the interest of safeguarding your health.

If asbestos is not damaged, you can live with it with no risk to your health. This is fully in line with the policy of other social landlords and the government.



Places where asbestos might be found



There are many places and household items which might contain asbestos, especially in older properties.

The following are common examples of where asbestos has been found in Selwood Housing properties.

Internally

- Bituminous roofing felt in the loft space
- Bituminous sink pads (black pads around the waste pipe under a sink)
- Electric storage heaters
- Floor tiles and adhesive
- Pipe boxing and panelling
- Textured ceiling coatings including Artex
- Toilet cisterns

Externally

- Cement under cloaking along the edge of the roof
- Corrugated cement roofing sheets
- Damp proof courses in brickwork
- Rain water pipes/guttering
- Soffits/fascias
- Soil and vent pipes

How can I keep safe?

Even if there is asbestos in your home, it is not usually a problem. But to make sure you stay safe, please:

- ✘ Don't saw, scrape or drill holes in materials which might contain asbestos
- ✔ Regularly check any material that you think contains asbestos to make sure it is still in good condition - don't touch it but look for signs of wear and tear, abrasions or water damage

If you find that the material's condition has substantially changed or is damaged in any way, contact customer support on 01225 715 715. An asbestos trained operative will attend within 24 hours to fix the damaged area and safely clean up any mess.



Until we come out:

Keep away from the area and do not handle the material

Do not dust, sweep or vacuum any debris and avoid trampling dust or mess through the property



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