

Local Authority Housing - Asbestos Policy

Summary

This policy outlines our approach to the management of asbestos within our properties to both ensure the safety of residents occupying the dwellings as well as make sure that we meet our statutory and legislative obligations.

Effective date

1 October 2024

Review

We will review this Policy every 3 years or when there has been an update to legislative, regulatory, best practice or operational changes.

Version

Version 1.3

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1. Scope

The policy covers:

- All council Housing Revenue Account (HRA) assets, including dwellings, common parts of blocks of flats and sheltered schemes, garages and other assets where we have a repair and maintenance responsibility.

Any reference in this policy to 'we', 'our' or 'us' refers to Portsmouth City Council, Local Authority Housing.

Any reference in this policy to 'tenant', 'customer' or 'resident' refers to a Portsmouth City Council, Local Authority Housing secure tenant, leaseholder or shared owner.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to:

- Outline our approach to the management of asbestos
- Ensuring we meet our statutory and legislative obligations.

3. Management of asbestos

The Housing asbestos duty holder is the Director of Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services.

Asbestos is hazardous when airborne, but tenants, staff and contractors will not be affected if they leave Asbestos Containing material (ACM) undisturbed.

The council operates a risk-based approach to the management of known Asbestos Containing Material (ACM). The two elements that inform the risk are:

1. Condition of the ACM, e.g. damaged vs. undamaged
2. Location of the ACM, e.g. likelihood of disturbance

ACM Treatment based on condition and location

1. Undamaged and unlikely to be damaged, then leave ACM in place and monitor
2. Good condition and not readily accessible, then seal ACM.
3. Slightly damaged and not readily accessible, then repair and seal ACM.
4. Any other condition or location, then remove by appropriately licensed ACM contractor.

Inspection regime for ACM located:

- ACM within communal areas will be inspected annually.
- ACM within dwellings will be inspected at every change of tenancy.

Contaminated Land

Site remediation will be considered after an assessment of the risk posed in each individual case.

Any work will be undertaken in accordance with [The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012](#) and the CAR-SOIL guidance.

For the testing of asbestos fibre within soil, it is required that the laboratory undertaken the testing has UKAS accreditation 17025. Within the accreditation it must state that they are able to undertake quantitative analysis of asbestos fibre with soils

4. Repairs service

When carrying out repairs and maintenance work our staff and contractors can prevent inadvertent exposure by carrying out the following:

- Review the asbestos register before commencing work.
- Proceed with caution, even when no ACM is recorded.
- Arrange an asbestos management survey that complies with the current legislation/guidance when ACM is suspected OR
- Treat as ACM and remove when appropriate/economic to do so, e.g. Artex, Floor Tiles.
- Apply the agreed control measures that are in place when carrying out any work that will disturb ACM.
- Report any damage or deterioration of ACM to the relevant contractor for remedial action.

5. Voids service

We will carry out a full management survey of each property when it becomes void. A refurbishment / demolition survey will be undertaken if appropriate where extensive void works are identified such as replacing a kitchen or bathroom.

The results will be uploaded to the asbestos register on the database. The housing officer will generate an "Asbestos in your Home" report for the new incoming tenant that will be provided at sign up alongside a DIY advice leaflet. The report will describe the locations of ACMs in the property and give advice on DIY in the home.

Where a management survey has identified any borrowed light over a doorway contains ACM, the borrowed light will be removed by an appropriately licensed ACM contractor.

6. Planned Projects

When undertaking any planned maintenance scheme we will ensure:

- a refurbishment / demolition survey is undertaken.
- relevant information is included in the Health and Safety tender documentation.

7. Asbestos Register

We will maintain a record of asbestos containing material (ACM) identified through management surveys in its asbestos register. The register is a shared IT system which is accessible to staff and contractors. The register is managed by the duty holder.

If a resident is undertaking alterations to their home or DIY, they can request an "Asbestos in your Home" report that will be provided on request to describe the locations of ACMs in the property and give advice on DIY in the home.

8. Asbestos Safety Panel

The panel will be chaired by the Head of Compliance and include appropriate Heads of Service from Buildings and Housing together with appropriate representation from other directorates. The panel will meet quarterly.

The panel will coordinate and communicate asbestos safety across all Housing, Neighbourhood and Building teams to ensure risks are managed consistently and are appropriately resourced, complying with all legislation and providing appropriate information to residents, staff and contractors.

The panel will have oversight of the process, changes to the legislation and effectiveness of the asbestos policy.

The panel will review the following key areas and implement changes required to processes, policies or communication to residents as appropriate:

- Re-inspection compliance including asbestos surveys
- Training provided to staff and information provided to residents
- Record all asbestos incidents and review any learning
- Changes to legislation, best practice, guidance or recommendations from reviews

9. Your responsibility

If you are planning any alterations to your home or want any advice regarding asbestos or suspect asbestos to be damaged, you should make us aware immediately.

Common locations where there may be asbestos in your home include.

- Decorative textured coatings (Artex) to ceilings and walls.
- Vinyl or thermoplastic products (such as floor tiles and underlays).
- Wall panelling and boxings (such as lining within meter cupboards or to service risers)
- Soffit boards (asbestos cement products).
- Corrugated sheets (such as garage and shed roofs).

10. Your voice

We provide tenants a wide range of meaningful opportunities to influence and scrutinise the Landlord Strategies, policies and services including the Resident Consortium together with repairs and maintenance focus groups.

If you would like to be included in future resident engagement focus groups and would like to know how to get involved, please contact us for more information:

You can contact our team by:

- Email: housing.engagement@portsmouthcc.gov.uk
- Phone: 02392 834835
- Website: visit the [Resident engagement and community resources on our website](#)

11. What have we done to make sure this Policy is fair?

We completed an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) to consider the positive and negative impacts this Policy may have on people with protected characteristics under the [Equality Act 2010](#). This Policy should have direct and positive equality and diversity impacts.

12. Regulation and legislation

We recognise the variety of legislation, and we will continue to monitor relevant legal guidance. The list below reflects some of the existing legal framework and relevant publications:

- [Housing Act 2004](#)
- [Social Housing \(Regulation\) Act 2023](#)
- [The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012](#)
- [Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974](#)

13. Related documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Local Authority Housing Landlord Policies, Strategies and Reports - [Housing policies, strategies and privacy notices](#)
- Tenancy Agreement / Leasehold Agreement
- Asset Management Strategy

14. How to feedback

If you have any questions around the policy or would like to know more about its application, please contact the relevant service in the first instance.

You can get this policy in large print, braille, audio or in another language by contacting your Housing Office. More information is available [translation, interpreting and audio information](#).

Compliments:

To help us provide the best service we can. We would like to hear customer views on the services that they use. If the customer is pleased with a member of staff or service, please let us know.

- Telephone: 02392 606383
- Email address: HNBLandlordComplaints@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Complaints:

If a customer is unhappy, they can refer to our LAH (Local Authority Housing) Landlord Complaints Policy.

- Online complaint form at [Make a housing complaint](#)
- Telephone: 02392 606383
- Email address: HNBLandlordComplaints@portsmouthcc.gov.uk
- [Landlord Complaints Policy](#)

Housing Ombudsman Service

If a customer is unhappy, they can contact the Housing Ombudsman Service for advice and guidance at any time.

- Online complaint form on [the Housing Ombudsman Service website](#)
- Telephone 0300 111 3000
- [Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code](#)