

ASBESTOS IN COUNCIL PREMISES – A Quick guide

Who needs to know about Asbestos?

- This Information is aimed at all staff, especially premise managers, receptionists, maintenance and caretaking staff.
- Don't panic – Asbestos is only dangerous when disturbed. If it is safely managed & contained it doesn't present a health hazard.

What has the Council done to manage asbestos?

- All premises have been surveyed to identify the location & condition of asbestos containing materials. Findings are recorded in the property Asbestos Register.
- Where it has been identified in poor condition, it has been encapsulated, enclosed or removed.
- Where it has been identified in good condition, it has been left, contained and managed. Removing asbestos containing materials may be more dangerous than simply containing them.

Records

- The Asbestos Register records the location of known asbestos, removed asbestos and non asbestos materials. The Register is usually kept in Reception.

Asbestos Basics

- Asbestos containing materials which are in good condition and not disturbed, do not pose a risk to your health.
- Asbestos becomes dangerous when disturbed by smashing, drilling, sandpapering or sawing, etc. because very fine asbestos fibres float in the air which may be breathed in.

Where is the Asbestos?

- It's in most buildings except those more recently built. If the building was built or refurbished after 2000 then it is unlikely that asbestos will be present and no further action is required.

Who is at Risk?

Anyone who uses your premises who may disturb or damage materials containing asbestos. Anyone who breathes in asbestos fibres. In fact, anyone whose work involves drilling, sawing or cutting into the fabric of premises could potentially be at risk for example:

- Contractors (e.g. Heating and ventilation engineers, telecommunications engineers, computer installers, electricians etc.)

- Volunteers
- Caretakers
- Teachers
- Librarians
- Shift Leaders
- Handy/maintenance person
- **ANYONE!**

All of the above **MUST:**

- Consult the Asbestos Register to check for the presence of asbestos containing materials in the area where they are about to work.
- Sign the Asbestos Register to confirm that they have checked the records.

If the area where they are about to work includes asbestos, a detailed assessment of whether the work will disturb it will be required. Contact the Strategic Asset Management Team and/or Health and Safety Team.

TRAINING / INFORMATION

All Council staff will receive appropriate asbestos awareness training for the level of competence required for them to discharge their duties.

- Anyone likely to disturb or manage asbestos in their day to day role e.g. premise managers, maintenance and caretaking staff must receive basic asbestos awareness training.
- Free awareness training sessions are available through the Corporate Training Programme. For more details please contact the Health & Safety Team.
- It is particularly important that those with responsibility for signing in contractors are aware of the local Asbestos Register and that presentation of the register is part of the contractors' signing in procedure.

If something goes wrong:

If the system fails and you think asbestos has been disturbed –

- Stop the work immediately, clear the immediate area to enable all doors to be closed and locked around the area.
- Close the windows and switch off any local ventilation. Leave all contaminated material in the area and display a notice to prevent access.
- Make a list of any persons who may have been exposed.
- Contact the Strategic Asset Management Team and / or Health and Safety Team.

See Appendix C of the Council's Asbestos Management Plan available on the Council's intranet, website or Learning Gateway.

Useful Telephone Numbers:

Health and Safety Team	01743 252819
Strategic Asset Management Team	01743 281036