

Asbestos Policy



**NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
PARTNERSHIP HOMES**

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| Name | Asbestos Policy |
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Strategic Lead

Sign

Date

Chair of Board

Sign

Date

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1.0 Introduction and Objectives

- 1.1 Northampton Partnership Homes (NPH) is an arm's length management organisation for West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) and NPH has delegated authority to deliver compliance and building safety activities on behalf of WNC.
- 1.2 NPH is responsible for maintenance and repairs to homes, communal blocks, and other properties we manage. The property owned by WNC and the other properties NPH manage, will have been constructed using asbestos containing materials. As such, we have a legal duty to manage asbestos in these buildings.
- 1.3 Homes or buildings built or refurbished before the year 2000 may contain asbestos. If an asbestos containing material is disturbed or damaged it can release asbestos fibres into the air which are a danger to health if inhaled. Workers who carry out repairs and maintenance work are at particular risk, however, building occupants could also be put at risk.
- 1.4 The key objective of this policy is to ensure that WNC and NPH including our Board, Executive Management Team, employees, partners and tenants are clear on our legal and regulatory asbestos safety obligations. This policy provides the framework our staff and partners will operate within to meet these obligations.
- 1.5 This policy forms part of our wider organisational commitment to driving a health and safety culture amongst staff and contractors (as detailed within our Health and Safety Policy). It will be saved on our shared drive and distributed to all relevant members of staff.

2.0 Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to the following property types:
 - Communal blocks.
 - Sheltered / independent living schemes.
- 2.2 Some aspects of this policy also apply to individual domestic properties (houses, flats bungalows, and so on). Applicable items will be clearly referenced.
- 2.3 This policy is relevant to all our employees, tenants, contractors, stakeholders and other persons who may work on, occupy, visit, or use our premises, or who may be affected by our activities or services. Adherence to this policy is mandatory.

3.0 Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1 The WNC Cabinet has overall governance responsibility for ensuring this policy is fully implemented to ensure full compliance with legislation and regulatory standards. As

such, the WNC Cabinet will formally approve this policy and review it every two years (or sooner if there is a change in legislation or regulation).

- 3.2 The Executive Management Team (EMT) will receive monthly performance reports in respect of asbestos safety and ensure compliance is being achieved. They will also be notified of any non-compliance issue identified.
- 3.3 Director of Property and Deputy CEO has strategic responsibility for the management of asbestos safety, and ensuring compliance is achieved and maintained. They will oversee the implementation of this policy.
- 3.4 The Head of Compliance has operational responsibility for the management of asbestos safety and will be responsible for overseeing the delivery of these programmes. The Asbestos and Legionella Officer will fulfil the role of the Appointed Person and will be the overall Responsible Person on behalf of The Head of Asset Strategy and Compliance.
- 3.5 Housing teams will provide support for gaining access to properties as necessary. The support provided will be in line with our Gain Access Policy.
- 3.6 Under the requirements of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 we will endeavour to formally appoint a Health and Safety Lead.

4.0 Legislation, Guidance and Regulatory Standards

4.1 **Legislation** - The principal legislation applicable to this policy is:

- The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012.
- This policy also operates within the context of additional legislation (see Appendix 1).

4.2 **Approved Code of Practice (ACoP)** - The principal ACoP applicable to this policy is:

- ACoP L143 - Managing and working with Asbestos (Second edition, 2013).

4.3 **Guidance** – The principal guidance documents applicable to this policy are:

- HSG227 - A comprehensive guide to managing asbestos in premises (First edition, 2002).
- HSG247 - Asbestos: The licensed contractors' guide (First edition, 2006).
- HSG264 - Asbestos: The survey guide (Second edition, 2012).
- INDG223 - Managing asbestos in buildings: a brief guide (Revision 5, April 2012).
- HSG210 - Asbestos Essentials: A task manual for building, maintenance and allied trades and non-licensed asbestos work (Fourth edition, 2018).
- HSG248 – Asbestos: The Analysts' Guide (Second edition, 2021).

- 4.4 **Regulatory standards** – We must ensure we comply with the Regulator of Social Housing’s regulatory framework and consumer standards for social housing in England; the Safety and Quality Standard is the primary one applicable to this policy.

The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 changes the way social housing is regulated and may result in future changes to this policy.

- 4.5 **Sanctions** – Failure to discharge our responsibilities and obligations properly could lead to sanctions, including prosecution by the Health and Safety Executive (the HSE) under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974; prosecution under the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007; prosecution under the Control of Asbestos Regulations; and via a regulatory judgement from the Regulator of Social Housing.

5.0 Obligations

- 5.1 Under The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 (CAR 2012) NPH has a legal obligation under Part 2, Section 4 ‘Duty to manage asbestos in non-domestic properties’ and is the ‘Duty Holder’ for the purposes of the legislation. We are required to:

- Find out if asbestos containing materials (ACMs) are present, where we have an obligation to do so, presuming that materials contain asbestos unless we have strong evidence that they do not.
- Identify the location and condition of any ACMs.
- Assume asbestos is present if the property was built prior to the year 2000/2001.
- Keep an up-to-date record (an asbestos register) of the location and condition of ACMs or presumed ACMs.
- Assess the risk from any ACMs found.
- Prepare an Asbestos Management Plan that sets out how we will manage the risk from ACMs, and review and monitor its implementation.
- Set up a system to provide information on the location and condition of ACMs to anyone who is liable to work on or disturb them.
- Assess the reliability of information we receive relating to asbestos within the properties we own and manage. Anyone who has information on the whereabouts of asbestos within these properties is required to make this available to us.

6.0 Statement of Intent

- 6.1 We acknowledge and accept our responsibilities under CAR 2012 as outlined in Section 5, and we recognise that the main hazard in relation to asbestos is the non-identification of ACMs. As such, we will protect those persons potentially exposed to asbestos as far as is

reasonably practical, through the use of appropriate control measures and working methods.

- 6.2 We will have an Asbestos Management Plan and will maintain an asbestos register.
- 6.3 We will ensure that information about ACMs (known or presumed) is provided to every person liable to disturb it, accidentally or during the course of their work. This includes employees, contractors and tenants.
- 6.4 We will generally not use asbestos labelling in domestic premises, however, in non-domestic premises and common areas of domestic blocks, labelling will be used where practicable.
- 6.5 We will provide appropriate personal protective equipment to our in-house delivery team where required.
- 6.6 We will ensure that there is a robust process in place to manage immediately dangerous situations identified during asbestos related works.
- 6.7 We will operate effective contract management arrangements with the contractors responsible for delivering the service, including ensuring contracts/service level agreements are in place, conducting client-led performance meetings, and ensuring that contractors' employee and public liability insurances are up to date on an annual basis.
- 6.8 We will use the legal remedies available within the terms of the tenancy and lease agreement should any tenant, leaseholder or shared owner refuse access to carry out essential asbestos related inspection and remediation works. Where tenant vulnerability issues are known or identified we will ensure we safeguard the wellbeing of the tenant.
- 6.9 We will establish and maintain a risk assessment for asbestos management and operations, setting out our key risks from asbestos and appropriate mitigations.
- 6.10 To comply with the requirements of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM) a Construction Phase Plan will be in place for all repairs to void and tenanted properties (at the start of the contract and reviewed annually thereafter), component replacement works and refurbishment projects.

7.0 Programmes

- 7.1 **Non-domestic properties** – All non-domestic properties (communal blocks/supported schemes) we own or manage, built prior to the year 2000/2001, will have an asbestos management survey that is compliant with CAR 2012 (dated after 6 April 2012 when this legislation came into effect).
- 7.2 We will maintain a programme of asbestos re-inspections for all properties that contain ACMs (known or presumed). Re-inspections will either be annual or in accordance with

the risk level as identified by the previous survey. We will not re-inspect any properties where the initial asbestos management survey confirms that there are no ACMs.

7.3 **Domestic properties** – We will carry out surveys within domestic properties. We currently hold asbestos survey data on approximately 100 per cent of domestic properties.

7.4 **Repairs / planned maintenance** - We will review existing asbestos survey information prior to carrying out any intrusive void work, day-to-day repairs, planned maintenance or refurbishment work. Where there is no asbestos information, prior to the work taking place, we will commission a refurbishment and/or demolition asbestos survey to the areas of the property that are likely to be disturbed as part of the proposed works. We will also undertake a management asbestos survey to the remainder of the property as part of the same refurbishment and/or demolition survey. Once completed, survey details will be provided to the relevant operatives or contractors.

8.0 Follow-up Work

8.1 Where asbestos is positively identified and removal, sealing or encapsulation is recommended by the competent person, this will be carried out as follows:

- **Non-licensed works** (as defined in regulation 2 of CAR 2012) – will be undertaken by a Licensed Asbestos Removal Contractor (LARC) licensed by the Health and Safety Executive in compliance with CAR 2012.
- **Notifiable non-licensed works** (as defined in regulation 2 of the CAR 2012) – will be undertaken by a LARC.
- **Licensed works** (as defined in regulation 2 of CAR 2012) – will be undertaken by a LARC.

9.0 Data and Records

9.1 We will maintain a core asset register of all properties we own or manage, setting out which properties are and are not required to be included on the asbestos re-inspection programme.

9.2 We will operate a robust process to manage all changes to stock, including property acquisitions and disposals, to ensure that properties are not omitted from asbestos programmes and the programme remains up to date.

9.3 We will keep an asbestos register in the Open Housing system. The asbestos register will include details of ACMs in the properties we own or manage, with information on the type, address, location and condition. We will hold inspection dates, asbestos surveys, details of remediation works and evidence of completion of these works in Civica.

9.4 We will keep all these records for the duration that we own and manage the property and have robust processes and controls in place to maintain appropriate levels of security for all asbestos related data.

9.5 We will keep air monitoring and health surveillance records for at least 40 years.

10.0 Tenant Engagement

10.1 We consider good communication essential in the effective delivery of asbestos safety, therefore we will establish a tenant engagement strategy and communication programme. We will also formally establish a Building Safety Group and Asset management group within the lifecycle of this policy. This will support tenants in their understanding of asbestos, advise them of how they can manage any risk if there is asbestos within their property, and encourage them to report any asbestos safety concerns.

10.2 We also aim to successfully engage with vulnerable and hard to reach tenants. We will share information clearly and transparently and will ensure that information is available to tenants via regular publications and information on our website.

10.3 We will endeavour to provide tenants with a tenant friendly version of the asbestos survey for their property, where we have carried one out. A full version of the asbestos survey will be made available upon request.

11.0 Competent Persons

11.1 The Asbestos and Lift compliance manager will hold a P405, or P407 qualification. If they do not have one of these, they will obtain this within 12 months of the approval of this policy.

11.2 Only competent contractors (as per HSG264) will carry out asbestos management surveys.

11.3 Only competent Licensed Asbestos Removal Contractors will carry out all work on asbestos, including non-notifiable non-licensed work, notifiable non-licensed work or licensed works.

11.4 Suitably competent persons will undertake asbestos re-inspections and the removal of non-licensed asbestos, under the supervision of persons who are suitably trained and competent to manage this work.

11.5 Only suitably competent asbestos consultants and contractors will provide third party technical quality assurance checks.

- 11.6 We will check that our contractors hold the relevant qualifications and accreditations when we procure them, and thereafter on an annual basis; we will evidence these checks and each contractor’s certification appropriately.

12.0 Training

- 12.1 We will deliver training on this policy and the procedures that support it, through appropriate methods including team briefings; basic asbestos awareness training; and on the job training for those delivering the asbestos programme, planned maintenance and repair works as part of their daily job. All training undertaken by staff will be formally recorded.

13.0 Performance Reporting

- 13.1 We will report key performance indicator (KPI) measures for asbestos safety that follow the requirements set out in the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) which came in to force on 1 April 2023 and must be reported to the Regulator on an annual basis.

- 13.2 We will report regular KPIs on performance to the Regulator as requested.

- 13.3 We will report the following asbestos safety performance:

| Report recipient | Frequency |
|------------------------------------|-----------|
| Regulator of Social Housing (KPIs) | Monthly |
| Regulator of Social Housing (TSMs) | Annual |
| Executive Management Team | Monthly |
| Board | Quarterly |
| Tenants | TBC |

- 13.4 We will also report the following:

Data – the total number of:

- Properties split by category (communal blocks/schemes, commercial/other).
- Properties with a post 2012 management survey.
- Properties without a post 2012 management survey.
- Properties on the re-inspection programme.
- Properties not on the re-inspection programme.
- Properties with a valid and in date re-inspection.
- Properties without a valid and in date re-inspection.
- Properties due to be re-inspected within the next 30 days.
- Completed, in-time and overdue follow-up actions arising from the surveys.

Narrative - an explanation of the:

- Current position.
- Corrective action required.
- Progress with completion of follow-up works.

In addition:

- The percentage of domestic properties with full asbestos data.
- The number of RIDDOR notifications to the HSE with regards to asbestos safety.

14.0 Quality Assurance

- 14.1 We will require external contractors to provide the results of their own five per cent quality assurance audit checks, as required by UKAS, on a monthly basis.
- 14.2 We will undertake ten per cent third party audits of asbestos removals and air monitoring.
- 14.3 We will commission an independent audit of asbestos management at least once every two years, to specifically test for compliance with legal and regulatory obligations and to identify any non-compliance issues for correction.

15.0 Significant Non-Compliance and Escalation

- 15.1 Our definition of significant non-compliance is any incident which has the potential to result in a potential breach of legislation or regulatory standard, or which causes a risk to health or safety, and which needs to be managed as an exception to routine processes and procedures.
- 15.2 All non-compliance issues will be reported and escalated as soon as possible, and no later than 24 hours after the incident occurred, or of an NPH employee becoming aware of it.
- 15.3 Any non-compliance issue identified at an operational level will be formally reported to the Asbestos and Legionella officer in the first instance, who will agree an appropriate course of corrective action with the Head of Compliance and report details of the same to the EMT and WNC.
- 15.4 In cases of serious non-compliance, WNC and Board will consider whether it is necessary to disclose the issue to the Regulator of Social Housing as required by the regulatory framework, or any other relevant organisation such as the Health and Safety Executive.
- 15.5 We will ensure there is a robust process in place to investigate and manage all RIDDOR notifications made to the HSE in relation to asbestos safety and will take action to address any issues identified and lessons we have learned, to prevent a similar incident occurring again.

16.0 Glossary

16.1 This glossary defines key terms used throughout this policy:

- **Duty Holder:** The owner of the non-domestic premises or the person or organisation that has clear responsibility for the maintenance or repair of non-domestic premises, for example through an explicit agreement such as a tenancy agreement or contract.
- **Management asbestos survey:** A survey to enable the management of asbestos-containing materials during the normal occupation and use of premises.
- **Refurbishment and/or demolition asbestos survey:** A refurbishment and/or demolition survey (previously known as a type 3 survey) is a survey which is necessary prior to any works which may affect the fabric of a building, and which is used to locate (as far as reasonably practicable) asbestos-containing materials. The survey may be within a localised area or cover the whole building.
- **UKAS:** The appointed national accreditation body for asbestos surveyors. Accreditation is a means of assessing, in the public interest, the technical competence and integrity of organisations offering evaluation services.

Appendix 1 - Additional Legislation

This policy also operates within the context of the following legislation:

- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- The Occupiers' Liability Act 1984
- The Workplace (Health Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992
- The Asbestos (Licensing) (Amendment) Regulations 1998
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (as amended) 2002 (COSHH)
- Hazardous Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2005 (Amendment 2009)
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)
- Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023

