



Wareham Town Council

Management Of Asbestos Policy

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1. Introduction

- 1.1.** Wareham Town Council (the “Council”) acknowledges the health hazards arising from exposure to asbestos and will protect those employees and other people potentially exposed as far as is reasonably practicable. This will be achieved by minimising exposure through the management of asbestos-containing materials in the workplace premises. Everyone who needs to know about asbestos will be effectively alerted to its presence. No one will be allowed to start work that could disturb asbestos unless the correct procedures are employed. This policy requires the full cooperation of management and staff at all levels.
- 1.2.** The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 came into force on 6 April 2012. These regulations bring together all previous sets of regulations covering the prohibition of asbestos, the control of asbestos at work and asbestos licensing.
- 1.3.** The regulations prohibit the importation, supply and use of all forms of asbestos. They continue the ban introduced for blue and brown asbestos in 1985 and for white asbestos in 1999. They also continue to ban the second- hand use of asbestos; products such as asbestos cement sheets and asbestos boards and tiles; including panels which have been covered with paint or textured plaster containing asbestos. If existing asbestos containing materials are in good condition, they may be left in place; their condition monitored and managed to ensure they are not disturbed.
- 1.4.** The following changes were made by the 2012 Regulations:
 - From 6 April 2012, some non-licensed work needs to be notified to the relevant enforcing authority.
 - From 6 April 2012, brief written records should be kept of non-licensed work, which must be notified e.g., copy of the notification with a list of workers on the job, plus the level of likely exposure of those workers to asbestos. This does not require air monitoring of every job if an estimate of degree of exposure can be made based on experience of similar past tasks or published guidance.
 - By April 2015, all workers/self-employed doing notifiable non-licensed work with asbestos must be under health surveillance by a doctor. Workers who are already under health surveillance for licensed work need not have another medical examination for non-licensed work. BUT medicals for notifiable non-licensed work are not acceptable for those doing licensed work.
 - Some modernisations of language and changes to reflect other legislation, e.g., the prohibition section has been removed, as the prohibition of supply and use of asbestos is now covered by REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals Regulations 2006).

2. Scope

- 2.1.** The aim of the Policy is to ensure that no-one is subjected to an environment which may subsequently affect their health. It has also been compiled in order that the Council, its employees and contractors comply with the duties and responsibilities imposed under the:

Health & Safety at Work Etc. Act, 1974 (HASAWA) Management of

- 2.2. This policy requires the full co-operation of management and staff at all levels and failure to observe any part of this Policy will be treated as misconduct, which could, depending on the circumstances, be deemed gross misconduct.

3. Asbestos types

- 3.1. The three types of asbestos most commonly used are:

Amosite (Brown),
Crocidolite (Blue)
Chrysotile (White).

- 3.2 Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral, which has been incorporated into materials used for fire protection, thermal and sound insulation. Hazards associated with asbestos containing materials (ACMs) are from the inhalation of airborne fibres. Any ACMs already in situ that are in good condition and are sealed do not present a risk to health and therefore can remain, so long as their condition is monitored regularly.

4. Associated medical conditions

- 4.1. The inhalation of asbestos fibres may cause asbestosis, lung cancer and mesothelioma.

- Asbestosis is a lung condition (a fibrosis of the lungs) caused by extended exposure to airborne asbestos fibres.
- Lung cancer research has indicated the risk of developing this disease is directly linked to the level of exposure. People who smoke and are exposed to asbestos fibres are at a far greater risk of contracting lung cancer than people who have the same exposure to asbestos alone.
- Mesothelioma is a malignant tumour of the pleura (coating of the lung), which is untreatable and primarily linked with exposure to asbestos fibres. There is no clear link between the risk of developing mesothelioma and the level of airborne fibre.

- 4.2. It has been estimated that asbestos has been responsible for over 30,000 work-related deaths since asbestos started to be widely used in the UK. Medical evidence has shown that the three diseases are associated with long-term exposure to airborne asbestos fibres. All are associated with the respiratory system and have relatively long latency periods.

5. Arrangements for managing asbestos

- 5.1. Asbestos-containing materials will be managed to ensure the prevention of the presence of asbestos fibres in the air that can be inhaled by employees and others who may be present. All work involving ACMs must be carried out in strict conformity with this policy and statutory obligations.
- 5.2. The Asbestos Regulations include the 'duty to manage asbestos'. Guidance on the duty to manage asbestos can be found in the Approved Code of Practice and guidance, L143 (second edition), ISBN 9780 7176 6188

5.3. Management of asbestos in the workplace involves:

- Surveying the premises to determine whether ACMs are present.
- Presuming materials contain asbestos unless there is strong evidence to the contrary.
- Assessing the amount and condition of the ACM.
- Making and keeping up to date a record of the location and condition of the ACMs in the premises.
- Assessing the risk from the ACMs.
- Preparing a written plan that sets out the location of the ACM and how the risk from this material will be managed.
- Taking steps to put the plan into action.
- Reviewing and monitoring the plan and the arrangements.
- Providing information on the location and condition of the material to anyone who is liable to disturb it.

5.4. Managing asbestos means everyone who needs to know about asbestos must be effectively alerted to its presence. No-one who might come into contact or work on or near asbestos particularly damaged or deteriorated asbestos, should be allowed to start work that could disturb asbestos without being given the relevant information. The condition of the asbestos-containing materials should be monitored, and the asbestos-containing materials should be properly maintained.

5.5. Those who are responsible for the 'day to day' site management of the Council premises will need to:

- Ensure compliance with this policy.
- Accommodate any inspection or surveying work.
- Accommodate any remedial work identified from the surveying program.
- Develop and implement an asbestos management plan for the premises.
- Monitor the condition of known or presumed ACMs in their building.
- Ensure that the necessary checks are undertaken to avoid the disturbance of any ACMs known or presumed.

5.6. In particular, ensure that no modifications/alterations or additions are undertaken which could disturb any presumed or identified ACMs.

5.7. All ACMs will be risk assessed and managed so that their condition does not deteriorate and pose a risk to health. Any contractors working near ACMs must be notified of its presence before their work commences.

6. Asbestos management plan

6.1. An asbestos survey must be completed for all buildings where the Council is responsible for that building. This will not apply to lease agreements where the tenant is the duty holder. However, the Council will still be responsible for the communal areas of these buildings.

6.2. The plan must set out the location of the ACM and how the risk from this material will be managed. The plan and the arrangements should be reviewed annually, or when there has been a significant change to the Council or personnel.

6.3. Where work on ACM's is to be carried out a contractor licensed under the Asbestos (Licensing) Regulations will be employed, unless the work is exempted from the Regulations.

7. Selection and control of contractors

- 7.1. Only licensed contractors are to be used for the removal of asbestos insulation, asbestos, asbestos coating, or asbestos insulating board.

8. Control of minor work on asbestos-containing materials

- 8.1. Where employees carry out minor work of limited duration with asbestos-containing materials, a risk assessment will be completed, and a decision made as to whether the work is necessary so as to void exposure altogether. Employees will be provided with information, instruction, and training, and they will follow the written plan and use the appropriate control measures.

9. Control of access to asbestos-containing materials (ACMs)

- 9.1. Access to ACMs in the premises will be controlled so as to prevent inadvertent disturbance of the material and the release of asbestos fibres. The asbestos management plan and register showing the location of all ACMs and presumed ACMs will be made available to those who need to be aware prior to undertaking work on the premises.
- 9.2. Systems will be put in place to ensure that anyone liable to disturb ACMs is made aware of its location and can avoid disturbing it. This will include informing contractors and/or staff of the location of known and presumed ACMs before any work commences.
- 9.3. If no information exists in relation to whether ACMs are present or not in the fabrication or fittings to be worked on, the work **MUST NOT** start until the appropriate investigations have taken place.

10. Asbestos related incidents

- 10.1. Since the prohibition of the supply and use of asbestos and asbestos-containing products by the Asbestos (Prohibitions) Regulations 1992 (as amended) the most likely cause of exposure is the disturbance of asbestos in the fabric of buildings. Unless the asbestos-containing material is in poor condition and/or is disturbed and produces air-borne fibres, people will not be exposed to asbestos.
- 10.2. Procedures to deal with asbestos-related incidents will need to be in place on site. These arrangements should be identified in the plan and those on site informed of what to do and who to contact for expert advice.
- 10.3. If the material has been damaged to warrant concern (e.g., a Ceiling panel has fallen, and debris is evident on the floor as opposed to a small scratch on the surface of the panel) expert advice must be sought and access to the area restricted until expert opinion has been obtained.
- 10.4. In the event of any ACMs becoming damaged, or if there is a suspicion that there is contamination then the decision to vacate the area immediately will be taken by the senior member of staff present based on a dynamic risk assessment of the prevailing circumstances.
- 10.5. Licensed Contractors will be engaged to seal or remove any damaged ACM's.
- 10.6. In the event of a Council employee, or member of the public being accidentally exposed to asbestos fibres, details of the incident must be recorded and held on

file. In the case of an employee this will be kept on their personnel file and medical records for a period of 40 years.

11. Employees

- 11.1. Staff will be made aware of the asbestos survey within their workplace upon commencement. All employees will need to ensure that they comply with this policy and any specific instruction from their manager/supervisor in relation to the management of asbestos.
- 11.2. Where a problem arises relating to the condition of ACMs on the premises or during work with asbestos-containing material, the employee must inform the Clerk immediately or in the absence of the Clerk, the Deputy Clerk.
- 11.3. In the case of an accident or emergency employees must respond quickly to ensure effective action can be taken by the Clerk or Deputy Clerk to correctly handle the situation.
- 11.4. If an employee feels that they have been exposed to damaged ACMs, or that they have disturbed ACMs during their work activities, they **MUST** inform the Clerk or Deputy Clerk immediately.

12. Training

- 12.1. All Council employees that have the potential to be exposed to asbestos fibres due to their working practices e.g. maintenance personnel, must undergo the appropriate asbestos awareness training to help them avoid any accidental exposure when undertaking their work.

13. Working with asbestos

- 13.1. The Council premises have been surveyed to determine whether ACMs are present. It should be presumed that materials contain asbestos unless there is strong evidence to the contrary. The amount and condition of the ACM will be assessed, and the measures identified to ensure that airborne asbestos fibres are not present or formed in the workplace.
- 13.2. Everyone who needs to know about asbestos must be effectively alerted to its presence, and no one should be allowed to start work that could disturb asbestos without being given the relevant information.
- 13.3. When work which may disturb asbestos is being carried out, the Asbestos Regulations require the prevention of exposure to asbestos fibres. Where this is not reasonably practicable, the exposure must be kept as low as reasonably practicable. The spread of asbestos fibres must be prevented. The Regulations specify the work methods and controls that should be used to prevent exposure and spread.

14. Asbestos removal

- 14.1. Asbestos removal work must be undertaken by a licensed contractor.
- 14.2. Under the Asbestos Regulations, anyone carrying out work on asbestos needs a license issued by HSE unless they meet one of the exemptions listed in the regulations.

- 14.3.** Although a license may not be required to carry out a particular job, there must be compliance with the rest of the requirements of the Asbestos Regulations.

15. Record keeping

- 15.1.** The Council is responsible for maintaining records of the following.

Management of asbestos-containing materials:

- A plan showing the location of asbestos-containing materials within the premises.
- A plan outlining the measures to be taken to manage the risks from ACMs in the premises.
- Records of information obtained during the selection of licensed asbestos removal contractors.

Work with asbestos:

- Assessment of potential exposures from work operations involving asbestos.
- Work plans for work involving asbestos.
- Information, instruction, and training given to employees.
- Maintenance of engineering checks, inspections, and regular examinations by competent persons.
- Air monitoring results (where appropriate).
- Health records and surveillance of employees exposed to asbestos above the airborne exposure limit.
- Provision and maintenance of respiratory protective equipment.
- Any occurrences of other persons exposed to uncontrolled releases of asbestos above the airborne exposure limit.

16. Monitoring and maintenance

- 16.1.** The condition of all asbestos-containing materials or materials suspected of containing asbestos will be inspected at six-monthly intervals to ascertain that there has been no damage or deterioration. Where damage or deterioration is found the asbestos-containing material will be reassessed and repaired or removed as appropriate in accordance with the regulations.

17. Procedures for dealing with health & safety issues

- 17.1.** Where an employee raises a problem related to health and safety regarding asbestos, the Council will:

- Take all necessary steps to investigate the circumstances.
- Take corrective measures where appropriate.
- Advise the employee of actions taken.

- 17.2.** Where a problem arises in the condition of an ACM in the premises or during work with an ACM, the employee must:

- Inform the Clerk or Deputy Clerk immediately.
- In the case of an accident or emergency, respond quickly to ensure effective treatment.

- 17.3.** The Clerk or Deputy Clerk will:

- Take all necessary steps to investigate the circumstances.
- Take corrective measures where appropriate, in line with HSE guidance.
- Advise the employees of actions taken.

18. Safe system of work

- 18.1.** Asbestos is hazardous to everyone if asbestos fibres are inhaled. The formation of airborne asbestos fibres can be prevented if the asbestos-containing materials in the premises are maintained in good condition and not damaged.

This can be achieved if you:

- Do not carry out any work on the fabric of the premises without the correct authorisation.
- Do not work upon asbestos-containing material without an assessment of the risk.
- Follow the written plan at work.
- Use the control measures identified as necessary to carry out the work without risk to health.
- Report any damage or deterioration of asbestos-containing materials or any incidents during work with asbestos.

19. Summary

- 19.1.** Asbestos is hazardous if in the form of airborne fibres, but it will not affect individuals if they do not disturb asbestos-containing materials. You can prevent inadvertent exposure to asbestos if:
- Before carrying out any work that might disturb asbestos-containing material in any part of the building, the work has been approved by Council following the consideration of whether there is any impact from asbestos being present.
 - The written plan and control measures when carrying out any work that will disturb asbestos is followed.
 - Any damage or deterioration of any asbestos-containing material is properly reported.