



St George Housing

# **ASBESTOS POLICY**

JULY 2023

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## ASBESTOS POLICY

### 1. INTRODUCTION

At St George Housing (SGH), we are committed to providing safe and healthy living environments for our tenants. Asbestos is a hazardous material commonly found in buildings constructed before the year 2000. As part of our duty of care, we have developed this policy to outline our approach to managing asbestos in our homes in compliance with UK laws and regulations.

### 2. POLICY STATEMENT

2.1 SGH is dedicated to ensuring the safety of our tenants and staff by adopting a proactive approach to manage asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) in our properties. Our policy aims to:

- Identify and assess the presence of asbestos in our homes.
- Implement effective measures to control and mitigate the risks associated with asbestos exposure.
- Comply with all relevant UK legislation and guidelines regarding asbestos management.
- Educate and inform our stakeholders, including tenants and staff, about the risks of asbestos and the appropriate actions to take.

### 3. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 This policy has taken into account the following legislation, regulation and codes of practice.

- Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Housing Act 2004

3.2 This policy complies with Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) Home and Consumer Standards.

#### 4. SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

4.1 The scope of this policy covers all properties managed by SGH. Our key objectives are:

- Conducting asbestos surveys and assessments for all properties under our management to identify and record the presence of ACMs.
- Developing and implementing asbestos management plans for each property based on survey findings and risk assessments.
- Regularly monitoring and reviewing the condition of ACMs and asbestos management plans.
- Providing relevant asbestos awareness training to all staff to ensure they can identify and handle asbestos safely.
- Informing and educating tenants about the presence of asbestos in their homes, potential risks, and the actions they should take to ensure their safety.

#### 5. ASBESTOS RISK ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE

5.1 At SGH, we employ a comprehensive risk assessment procedure to detect and manage asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) within our residential properties. Our approach ensures the safety of our tenants, staff, and contractors, and is in line with UK laws and regulations. The process is as follows:

5.2 **Asbestos Survey:** Trained and qualified asbestos surveyors conduct thorough inspections of each property under our management. The surveyors identify and assess potential ACMs using non-intrusive methods, including visual inspections and sampling where necessary.

5.3 **Risk Categorisation:** Based on the survey findings, ACMs are categorised into low, medium, or high-risk levels. This categorization considers factors such as the condition, location, and accessibility of the asbestos materials.

5.4 **Risk Assessment:** A detailed risk assessment is performed for each identified ACM. This assessment evaluates the likelihood of asbestos **fibre** release and the potential exposure levels to occupants or anyone who may come into contact with the materials.

5.5 **Asbestos Management Plan:** Following the risk assessment, an asbestos management plan is developed for each property. This plan outlines the actions required to control and minimize the risks associated with the identified ACMs. The plan includes measures such as encapsulation, enclosure, or, in high-risk cases, safe removal.

- 5.6 **Regular Monitoring:** We conduct periodic inspections to monitor the condition of ACMs and ensure that the management plan remains effective. These inspections are scheduled based on the risk level, ranging from 3 to 24 months.
- 5.7 **Asbestos Awareness Training:** Our staff and contractors receive specialized asbestos awareness training to identify potential ACMs and understand the proper procedures for handling and reporting any suspected asbestos materials.
- 5.8 **Tenant Information:** We inform our tenants about the presence of asbestos in their homes and provide them with clear instructions on how to avoid disturbing ACMs. Additionally, tenants are educated on whom to contact if they suspect any damage or deterioration of asbestos materials.
- 5.9 **Emergency Response:** We have established an emergency response procedure to handle any incidents involving the release of asbestos fibers. This procedure includes immediate isolation of the area and the engagement of licensed asbestos removal contractors when necessary.
- 5.10 **Record Keeping:** All asbestos-related information, including survey reports, risk assessments, Asbestos register and management plans, is documented and maintained in our online tenancy management system.
- 5.11 By following this rigorous risk assessment procedure, SGH ensures that asbestos is managed safely and effectively in our residential properties, minimizing the potential risks to health and maintaining compliance with UK laws and regulations.

## **6. ESCALATION PROCEDURE AND TENANT ACTIONS**

- 6.1 In the event of suspected asbestos-containing materials in a property managed by SGH, the following escalation procedure will be followed:
- Tenants should immediately report any concerns or signs of damaged materials that may contain asbestos to the SGH maintenance team or the designated point of contact.
  - The maintenance team will respond promptly to assess the situation and arrange for an asbestos survey if necessary.
  - If ACMs are confirmed, SGH will develop and execute an appropriate asbestos management plan to control and minimize risks.
  - Temporary measures, such as isolation or encapsulation, will be implemented until permanent solutions are in place.
  - The affected tenant(s) will be informed about the situation, the actions taken, and any necessary precautions they need to follow to ensure their safety.
  - The maintenance team can be contacted 24 hours a day on 0207 419 5140.

## **7. ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT TIMETABLE**

- 7.1 Depending on the severity of the risk identified during asbestos assessments, SGH will follow a structured timetable for asbestos management:
- 7.2 **Low-Risk ACMs:** Regular inspections and monitoring will be conducted to ensure the material remains in good condition. Re-inspection will occur every 12-24 months, or sooner if required.
- 7.3 **Medium-Risk ACMs:** More frequent inspections, at least every 6-12 months, will be carried out. Any necessary repair or encapsulation work will be completed promptly.
- 7.4 **High-Risk ACMs:** Immediate action will be taken to isolate or remove the material. Regular reviews and inspections will be conducted every 3-6 months.
- 7.5 Remember, Asbestos is only dangerous if disturbed. At SGH, we are dedicated to maintaining the highest standards in asbestos management to safeguard the well-being of our tenants and uphold our legal obligations. This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains up-to-date and effective in protecting the health and safety of our stakeholders.

## **8. KEY DEFINITIONS**

- 8.1 **HSE** - Health and Safety Executive: The regulatory body responsible for enforcing asbestos management and health and safety regulations in the UK.
- 8.2 **(CAR)2012** - Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012: The legislation that sets out the legal requirements for managing asbestos in non-domestic and domestic premises.
- 8.3 **Duty Holder:** The individual or organisation responsible for the maintenance or repair of non-domestic and domestic premises, which includes ensuring compliance with asbestos management regulations.
- 8.4 **UKAS accredited:** Certification or qualification that has been recognised and accredited by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service, indicating compliance with specific standards and guidelines.
- 8.5 **Non-domestic properties:** Commercial buildings, including offices, and may also include common areas of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), such as staircases and gardens.
- 8.6 **Domestic properties:** Residential buildings where people live.

- 8.7 **Intrusive Refurbishment and Demolition (R&D) Survey:** A survey required for premises undergoing refurbishment, upgrading, or demolition. The survey assesses the presence of asbestos-containing materials without the need for detailed ACM condition records.
- 8.8 **Non-licensed works:** Works carried out with low risk of damaging or disturbing asbestos-containing materials and can be performed without a specific license.
- 8.9 **Notifiable Non-Licensed Works (NNLW):** Work carried out on offices that must be notified to the Local Authority. In the case of domestic properties that meet certain risk criteria, the HSE must be notified 14 days before the work starts.
- 8.10 **Licensed works:** High-risk asbestos-related work that must be carried out only by a contractor holding a license issued by the HSE.
- 8.11 **RIDDOR notices:** Reporting of Injuries, Diseases, and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations 2013: Requires employers, the self-employed, and people in control of work premises (the Responsible Person) to report specific serious workplace accidents, occupational diseases, and dangerous occurrences.
- 8.12 **Management Survey:** A survey aimed at managing asbestos-containing materials during normal occupation and use of premises, covering routine maintenance work. Simple and straightforward premises can have a Management Survey conducted by the duty-holder, while complex premises require a surveyor.
- 8.13 **ACMs:** Asbestos Containing Materials: Materials that contain asbestos fibres.
- 8.14 **SLT:** Abbreviation for the Senior Leadership Team, comprising the CEO, Business Development, Director of Finance and Company Secretary responsible for strategic decision-making and overall management of the organisation.

## **9. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 9.1 SGH's Board will have overall governance responsibility for ensuring the asbestos policy is fully implemented to ensure full compliance with the regulatory standards, legislation, and approved codes of practice.
- 9.2 The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will receive reports in respect of asbestos management performance and ensure compliance is being achieved. They will also be notified of any non-compliance issue identified.

- 9.3 The Director of Governance has strategic responsibility for the management of asbestos and ensuring compliance is achieved and maintained. The Governance manager will oversee the implementation of the Asbestos Policy.
- 9.4 The Housing Manager will be responsible for overseeing the delivery of the agreed survey inspection programmes and the prioritisation and implementation of any works arising from the surveys.
- 9.5 The Housing Manager will provide key support in gaining access into properties where access is proving difficult and use standard methods to do so. They will also facilitate the legal process to gain access as necessary.
- 9.6 The Director of Governance will check the relevant qualifications of employees working for these contractors annually. Evidence of relevant qualifications will be stored on our online database.

## **10. COMPETENT PERSON**

- 10.1 The Director of Governance will ensure that competent (UKAS accredited) contractors are procured and appointed to deliver initial asbestos management surveys and the ongoing programme of surveys thereafter.
- 10.2 The Director of Governance will ensure that competent Licensed Asbestos Removal Contractors (LARC) are appointed for all notifiable non-licensed work or licensed works.

## **11. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 11.1 In writing this policy we have carried out assessment to ensure that we are considering, equality, diversity and inclusion. Our assessments did not indicate that any group had been adversely impacted by our approach to allocations.
- 11.2 We have also carried out a privacy impact assessment as information regarding applicants is sensitive. However, responsible information sharing plays a key role in the letting of our homes. We follow information sharing protocols with local authorities and our partner where they are in place.
- 11.3 To request copies of these assessments, please contact [info@stgeorgehousing.co.uk](mailto:info@stgeorgehousing.co.uk).



## **12. RELATED INTERNAL POLICIES**

- 12.1 Gas Safety Policy
- 12.2 Fire Risk Management Policy
- 12.3 Legionella Policy
- 12.4 Electrical Safety Policy

## **13. CONSULTATION**

- 13.1 This policy will be reviewed in consultation with residents, staff other key stakeholders.

## **14. REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

- 14.1 This policy will be reviewed at least every two years or as required to take into account changes in legislation.

**Responsible officer:** Housing Manager

**Policy Author:** Director of Governance

**Policy version:** V1

**Date of Board Approval:** August 2023

**Date the next review is due:** August 2025