



# Safety & Wellbeing Guidance Document

## GD 17 – Asbestos in the Workplace

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## **Guidance Document 17 – Asbestos in the Workplace**

### **Introduction**

The following guidance is designed to ensure that statutory legislation relating to the management of asbestos containing materials (ACMs) is strictly adhered to and that no person is exposed to risk from asbestos within council controlled premises. This document supports the council's position outlined within the arrangements section 20 (AS20) – The Management of Asbestos in Council Managed Premises.

This document takes its lead from the standards established within the HSE's publication HSG 227 "A comprehensive guide to managing asbestos in premises", the principals of which are outlined in appendix 1 and HSG 264 "Asbestos: The survey guide"

Guidance is provided in the following areas:

1. Statement
2. Asbestos Legislation
3. Asbestos Survey Programme
4. Provision of Asbestos Awareness and Asbestos Management Training
5. Premises Asbestos Management Plans
6. Provision of Asbestos Information to Premises Occupants and Visitors
7. Asbestos Management Procedure
8. Programmed Construction Activities
9. Routine Repair and Maintenance Work
10. Discovery of Previously Unidentified Suspect Materials
11. Accidental Release of Asbestos Fibre
12. Asbestos Contractors and Monitoring Agencies
13. Management of Asbestos Works

Appendix 1 - General Overview of Expected Actions to Manage Asbestos Containing Materials (Based on standards established in HSG 227)

Appendix 2 - Management of Asbestos Related Information

Appendix 3 - Asbestos Management Responsibilities

Appendix 4 – Contractor Briefing Sheet

# **The Management of Asbestos in Council Managed Premises**

## **1. Statement**

North Lanarkshire Council affirms its commitment to achieving compliance with all statutory legislation regulating the management of asbestos. The Council recognises its statutory asbestos management responsibilities and reaffirms its commitment to protecting the health, safety and welfare of employees, tenants, members of the general public and all such persons who may be affected by council activities and undertakings in respect of exposure to asbestos.

The Council will undertake a programme of surveying such premises in order to identify the presence of any asbestos-containing materials. Where such materials are identified, condition and risk assessments will be made and appropriate action taken to either remove these materials or to leave them in position and to manage and maintain them in sound and safe condition.

No asbestos-containing materials will be used, or re-used, during the construction or alteration of buildings or services and adequate asbestos awareness and asbestos management training will be given to persons who may come into contact with asbestos during the course of their work and to those persons who are in a position to influence how this work is carried out.

## **2. Asbestos Legislation**

The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 came into force on 6 April 2012, bringing together three previous sets of regulations covering the prohibition of asbestos, the control of asbestos at work and asbestos licensing. The standards established by these regulations are deemed the minimum standards sought by North Lanarkshire Council.

The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 came into force on 6th April 2015, replacing the previous Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007 which place emphasis on safety throughout construction projects, from design to completion.

## **3. Asbestos Survey Programme**

There will be a programme of survey and inspection that will aim to identify and monitor, so far as is reasonably practicable, the asbestos containing materials in buildings managed by the council. These surveys will be undertaken in accordance with HSG227 and HSG 264 and reflect the standards expected within a "type 2" survey. Surveys will be reported in the council's preferred data recording and processing format and made available via the Property Information Software Application (PISA).

Where construction/ refurbishment work is being programmed then a more detailed survey will be required prior to any such work commencing. Every effort to undertake a detailed “refurbishment or demolition” survey should be made to ensure that contract documentation contains an accurate representation of the asbestos materials likely to be present in the establishment. It is recognised that this may be difficult if the building is in constant use, and cannot be isolated for sampling purposes. If such sampling cannot take place this should be made clear to potential contractors and comprehensive procedures utilised to ensure that unsampled areas are carefully investigated once the building area is free of operational staff.

Requests for asbestos investigations outside of the normal survey programme (e.g. before construction/refurbishment activities) must be made, in writing, to the relevant Asbestos Team at least **8 weeks** prior to Stage 1 of any tendering procedure, or at least **6 weeks** prior to any minor works, in order to allow the team sufficient time to reschedule their work programme and to properly undertake all necessary enquiries and searches. If the Asbestos team are unable to respond within the required timescales, they will advise on alternative mechanisms that will provide the required information within the timescale.

#### **4. Provision of Asbestos Awareness and Asbestos Management Training**

Services will identify persons having asbestos management responsibilities for council controlled premises and will ensure that they receive appropriate asbestos awareness and asbestos management training in order that they may competently fulfil their statutory legal duties with regard to the management of asbestos (appendix 3 outlines such responsibilities).

Where premises are shared between Services or leaseholders, the level of each person’s asbestos-management responsibility will be determined by the terms of the lease(s) which apply. Where more than one council Service occupy an building then the Service with the largest number of employees based within the establishment will take the lead on this matter unless otherwise agreed.

Services will identify persons who may come into contact with asbestos during their normal work activities, also persons exercising a degree of control over the funding, scheduling and supervision of such activities and will ensure that they receive appropriate asbestos awareness and asbestos management training.

The relevant asbestos team and Service health and safety team will be consulted as to the training provision most appropriate for each identified person and all such training received will be recorded within each person’s personal file.

Contracting organisations appointed by the Council to undertake work that may disturb asbestos will receive an appropriately detailed briefing on the asbestos procedures to be followed when working in council establishments. Agreement must be reached on how the contractor’s employees are to receive the appropriate information, instructions, training and supervision to enable them to work as safely as possible.

## 5. Premises Asbestos Management Plans

In conjunction with the Head of Establishment, the relevant asbestos team will develop an asbestos management plan taking account of the nature and types of asbestos present in an establishment. Asbestos management plans will be premises-specific, recording the location and condition of all identified or presumed ACMs and setting out what management actions will be taken to control any risk assessed as being presented by these materials. The head of establishment will then be responsible for the management of the plan, whilst the Asbestos team will programme re-inspections at a frequency outlined by the plan.

Asbestos management plans will be regularly reviewed and will be amended whenever they are assessed as being no longer effective or valid. Asbestos management plans will be held on premises and brought to the attention of every person liable to come into contact with ACMs within the premises.

The Asbestos Team will be provided with copies of all premises-specific asbestos management plans and provided with updated plans should these be subsequently amended for any reason. A system for the distribution of information with each Service will be developed that facilitates the principals established in appendix 2 of this document.

The Head of Establishment will act as the Property Asbestos Co-ordinator, although they can designate a locally responsible person to undertake this role, and will ensure that the premises asbestos management plan is properly implemented and adhered to. Health and Safety Officers will undertake random checks to ascertain whether premises asbestos management plans have been properly implemented and are being correctly maintained.

The management plan for each location must be available locally and in a hardcopy format, to be known as the “asbestos register” and it will be available to those working in the building. Particular care will be taken to make the information within the register available to those undertaking maintenance works.

Management plans should consider:

- Communication mechanisms for employees, contractors and others;
- Frequency of monitoring visits to check the condition of the ACM;
- Safe systems of work required to minimise exposure risks;
- Labelling regimes;
- Colour coding of ACM;
- Protection/Enclosure mechanisms;
- Encapsulation considerations;
- Repair works required;
- Aspirations for removal.

## **6. Provision of Asbestos Information to Premises Occupants and Visitors**

Property Asbestos Co-ordinators have an obligation to inform any person liable to come into contact with ACMs about the presence and condition of such materials.

All staff and anyone intending to carry out work on the premises must be informed that the premises contain (or may contain) ACMs and a copy of the premises asbestos management plan made available to them in order that they are made aware of the location and condition of these materials.

As an additional safeguard against the accidental damage of ACMs, the use of warning signs is encouraged in locations where such signs will not cause unnecessary anxiety. The use of signs will be subject to discussion with the Property Asbestos Co-ordinator and only the recognised asbestos warning sign will be used to indicate the location of ACMs that have been positively identified by surveying and sampling analysis.

There may be occasions where the provision of written information is required and indeed necessary. The Contractor Briefing Sheet contained in appendix 4 provides a template for the type of information that may be appropriate and allows for local information to be added.

Where work is to be undertaken which may be affected by asbestos being present or indeed work to remove asbestos, the relevant trade union representatives should be advised in order to assist in communicating planned work at the establishment to the employees who work there.

## **7. Asbestos Management Procedure**

Whilst all council controlled premises have been surveyed, and documentation is readily available, in the event that an asbestos management plan cannot be located then the premise will be presumed to contain asbestos. All persons will adopt a precautionary approach and any material which may be suspected to contain asbestos will be presumed to do so until confirmed otherwise by material sampling and laboratory analysis, or the most up to date management plan has been located and made available.

Service based permit-to-work procedures, in keeping with the corporate standards, will be operated within all premises in an effort to manage access to areas where ACMs have been identified or are suspected to be present. When ACMs are identified as being present in locations in which persons intend to work (e.g. to undertake repairs and maintenance) their activities must be conducted in such a manner as to avoid disturbance of these materials.

If the work can be carried out without disturbance of the ACMs, the Head of Establishment or Property Asbestos Co-ordinator can give their permission for the work to commence. If the proposed method of working cannot avoid disturbance of ACMs, the Head of Establishment or Property Asbestos Co-ordinator must withhold giving their permission-to-work until an adequate risk assessment has been carried out and satisfactory arrangements put in place to control any risks. In such circumstances, detailed consideration of the proposed work will be necessary before the work is allowed to proceed (the Property Maintenance Officer must be involved). It is the responsibility of the Property Asbestos Co-ordinator to ensure that the General Permission Permit procedure is correctly followed (see arrangement section 40 – Permits to Work).

Each Service will appoint a Service Asbestos Co-ordinator with the responsibility for distributing the information being collated and keeping the Property Asbestos Co-ordinators within their Service updated on Service procedures etc.

## **8. Programmed Construction Activities**

The possibility of encountering ACMs must be a primary consideration when planning for any construction activity, including repairs and maintenance, refurbishment, new build projects and demolition. Those with the responsibility for designing or carrying out such activities must be provided with adequate asbestos information and management instruction in order to prevent unplanned disturbance of any ACMs.

All parties must co-operate to make all necessary enquiries and to exchange all available information as to the possible presence of asbestos in the materials or installations intended to be worked upon. If reliable information is not available, investigations must be carried out in sufficient time to allow the additional operational arrangements and financial resources that may be required (should the presence of ACMs be confirmed) to be taken into account at the project design stage.

Until investigations have been undertaken, the materials or installations intended to be worked upon will be assumed to contain asbestos. If asbestos is identified within the materials or installations programmed to be worked upon, this work will not be allowed to start until appropriate asbestos management procedures have been put in place.

## **9. Routine Repair and Maintenance Work**

The provision of accurate asbestos information and management instruction applies equally to those persons undertaking routine repair and maintenance work, however minor, as it does to those undertaking major works.



## 10. Discovery of Previously Unidentified Suspect Materials

If, during maintenance work, previously unidentified suspect ACMs (i.e. materials that are clearly not wood, plaster, brick, fibreglass, fibreboard, metal, glass etc) are encountered during the course of any maintenance activities, the work will be immediately stopped and the Property Asbestos Co-ordinator informed. The relevant asbestos team will be contacted for advice and the Property Asbestos Co-ordinator will record the actions subsequently taken into the asbestos register, with an updated management plan being provided at the earliest opportunity.

If, during refurbishment/demolition work, previously unidentified suspect ACMs (i.e. materials that are clearly not wood, plaster, brick, fibreglass, fibreboard, metal, glass etc) are encountered during the course of any maintenance activities, the work will be immediately stopped and the Contact Administrator informed. The relevant asbestos team will be contacted for advice and the management plan will be updated as required.

## 11. Accidental Release of Asbestos Fibre

In the event of accidental unplanned release of asbestos fibre into the workplace, immediate steps must be taken to mitigate the effects of the occurrence, the first priority being to prevent any further material damage and the possible spread of contamination or exposure by ensuring that the effected area is cleared of occupants and restricting access to it.

The Property Asbestos Co-ordinator, Service Health and Safety Team and the Council Health and Safety Officer must be informed of such an occurrence as soon as possible. The relevant asbestos team will also be informed of the situation and will provide advice as to the most appropriate control procedures to employ. Dangerous occurrences involving the accidental release of respirable asbestos fibre in quantities that may cause injury must be reported to the Health and Safety Executive **as soon as the release of respirable asbestos fibre is positively confirmed**. Each Service will put in place a process that will permit the timely notification of the incident to the HSE. The Property Asbestos Co-ordinator, Contract Administrator and the Council's Health and Safety Officer should be advised of the intention to report and subsequently given a copy of the notification made.

Any employee or occupant of council controlled non-domestic premises who may have been exposed to respirable asbestos fibre, will be given access to advice and information on the matter along with the option to receive one to one counselling from the council's occupational health provider. Details of the incident should be recorded in the employee's personal file.

Where a tenant of a council property may have been exposed, support and guidance will be given as necessary.

## **12. Asbestos Contractors and Monitoring Agencies**

Works requiring the disturbance or removal of ACMs within council controlled premises will only be undertaken by suitably licensed contractors. Such works will be undertaken only after prior liaison with the relevant asbestos team and only in strict compliance with all statutory legislation; approved codes of practice and associated guidance documents.

Air monitoring, clearance monitoring and the analysis of sampled materials to determine if asbestos fibre is present will only be undertaken by UKAS accredited agencies.

## **13. Management of Asbestos Works**

The contract administrator, acting on behalf of the council, must ensure the competence of designers, contractors and other members of the project team and that they are appointed early enough and adequately resourced to enable them to undertake their duties in a proper manner.

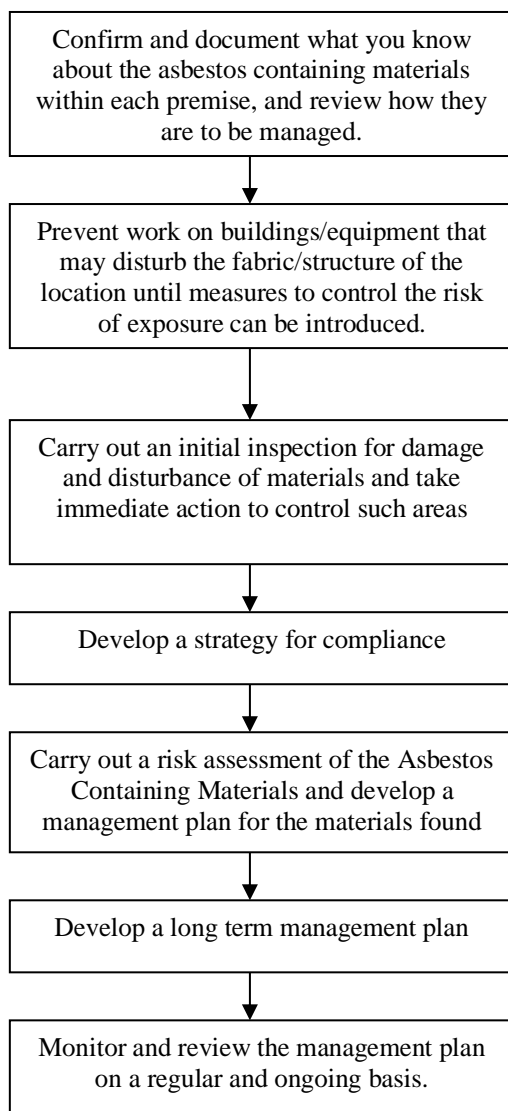
The contract administrator must pass all available information concerning ACMs to the project team early into the project, so that any work involving asbestos can be properly planned for and any potential risks effectively managed. If ACMs are to be disturbed or removed during any programmed construction activity, the contract administrator must inform the relevant asbestos team of this intention.

The contract administrator will seek advice from the appropriate asbestos team on the most suitable asbestos management and working procedures for the contract in mind. It will be the responsibility of the contract administrator to ensure tender documentation incorporates sufficient information to allow adequate management procedures to be developed by those tendering for the work.

Where work is to take place on ACMs then the appointed asbestos contractor will provide the Contract Administrator with a written plan of work detailing how the asbestos-works phase of the construction activity will be undertaken. The Asbestos Team will be consulted, as necessary, on the content of such a plan before it is regarded as being acceptable. For notifiable asbestos work, any amendments required must be made prior to the plan of work being submitted to the appropriate enforcing authority.

The Contract Administrator will monitor the work, liaising closely with the Corporate Health and Safety Team. Upon completion of the asbestos work, it is the responsibility of the Contract Administrator to ensure that the area hand-back and reoccupation procedures are correctly followed.

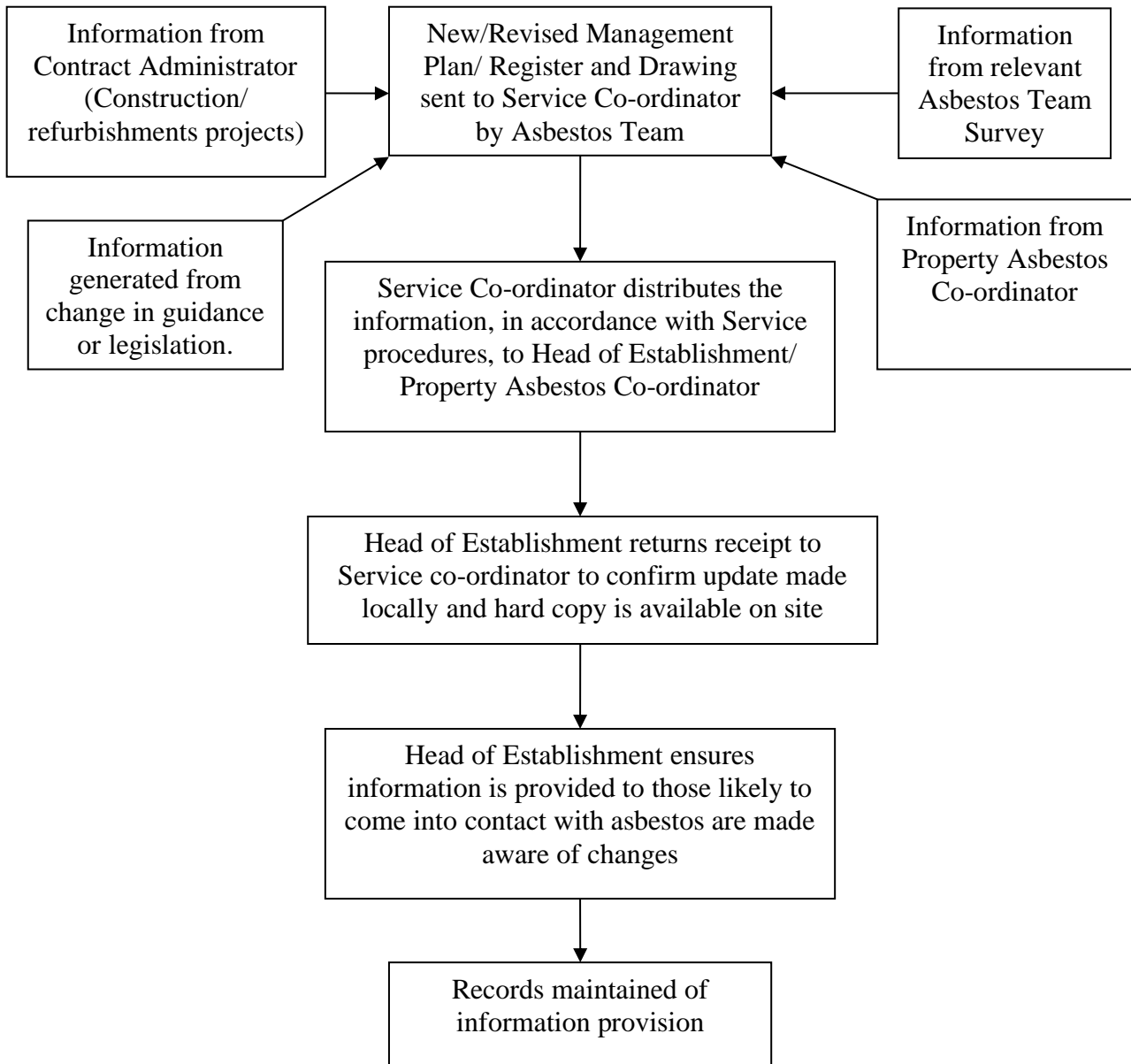
## General Overview of Expected Actions to Manage Asbestos Containing Materials (Based on standards established in HSG 227)



In summary the duty to manage asbestos in non domestic premises requires three main elements:

1. Assess whether premises contains asbestos,
2. Assess the risk from asbestos; and
3. Take action to manage the risk from asbestos.

**Management of Asbestos Related Information**



## **Asbestos Management Responsibilities**

### Chief Executive

- To put in place safe systems of work that will manage, so far as is reasonably practicable, the risks associated with the presence of asbestos containing materials in the properties managed by North Lanarkshire Council.

### Assistant Chief Executive

- To allocate Service specific resources that will adequately contribute to the effective management of Asbestos Containing Materials in properties managed by the Service.
- To appoint a Service Asbestos Co-ordinator.
- To put in place arrangements to appoint Property Asbestos Co-ordinators capable of making effective asbestos related decisions in respect of the establishments for which they have a responsibility.

### Asbestos Team

- Providing professional lead in the matter of Asbestos Management.
- Undertaking survey work in order to maintain the information in the property asbestos management plan.
- Undertaking appropriate survey work to enable construction/refurbishment and demolition to be undertaken safely
- To prepare information for, and publish to, relevant information system eg. PISA/HSMS.
- To prepare survey data and management plans for distribution to relevant Service Asbestos Co-ordinator(s).
- Contribute to the provision of training to those holding responsibilities for the management of ACM's within council properties.

### Head of Establishment

- To ensure an asbestos management plan exists for their building(s).
- To act as the Property Asbestos Co-ordinator, or appoint someone to that role.
- To liaise with trade union representatives as appropriate advising of any plans for work within an establishment which could be affected by asbestos being present.

### Property Asbestos Co-ordinator

- To ensure a hardcopy of the asbestos register is readily available on site.
- To ensure that all those working within the building are aware of its location and, where appropriate its content.
- To ensure that those visiting the site to survey or maintain the site have read and understood the content of the surveys and management plan. This must include the collection of a signature to demonstrate the register has been consulted.
- To update the management plan and survey details when necessary.
- To provide information to the Asbestos Team, via the Head of Establishment as necessary, on the change in status for any ACM's on site, e.g. damage, or new materials being identified.

### Service Asbestos Co-ordinator

- To co-ordinate the distribution of asbestos related information across the Service.
- To develop and maintain an asbestos management procedure that is appropriate for the Service.
- To contribute towards the monitoring of the systems implemented within the Service.

### Service Health and Safety Team/Co-ordinator

- To support the Service Asbestos Co-ordinator in the undertaking of their duties.
- To provide specific advice on the matter of asbestos management within Service establishments and in conjunction with the Asbestos Team.
- To contribute, as necessary, towards the provision of information, instruction and training for Service employees or clients.
- To develop/contribute towards a Service specific procedure that ensures effective management of ACM's in Service establishments.

### Corporate Health and Safety team

- To monitor the implementation of this corporate arrangement.
- Provision of advice on the training levels appropriate for those with asbestos related responsibilities.
- To investigate asbestos related incidents and make revisions to this arrangement as necessary.

### Property Maintenance Officer

- To ensure that those engaged to undertake maintenance work in a property are made aware of the procedures in relation to asbestos before work commences
- To monitor the compliance levels of the contractors working within properties that contain ACM's
- To advise the Asbestos Team of any asbestos materials found by, or damaged by, contractors undertaking maintenance work.
- In the event of asbestos damage being reported to work with the Property Asbestos Co-ordinator to ensure that the area is vacated and steps are taken to seek professional assistance from the Asbestos Team

### Contract Administrator

- To gather asbestos related information prior to any tender document being issued and ensuring its inclusion in the tender.
- To ensure the appointed contractor has been adequately briefed on the management procedures operating within North Lanarkshire Council in respect of Asbestos.
- To alert the Asbestos Team to the discovery of additional asbestos materials during any construction/refurbishment/demolition work under their supervision.
- To monitor the compliance levels of the contractors working within properties that contain ACM's.

### Contractor

- To undertake maintenance/construction work in a manner that permits compliance with the duties placed upon them by the Control of Asbestos Regulations
- Work in accordance with the instructions and permits issued by North Lanarkshire Council
- Notify the Property Maintenance Officer or Contract Administrator of any asbestos related incidents or discoveries

### Asbestos Contractor

- Any contractor appointed by the council or by a contractor working on behalf of the council will undertake their work in accordance with the standards outlined in HSG 227.
- Make use of UKAS accredited laboratories
- Keep the Contractor/Council informed of the results received or issued identified.



## Contractor Briefing Sheet

### ASBESTOS

This sheet aims to provide information to contractors and other building users on the matter of asbestos and its potential presence within the building. If construction work is taking place then it should be used in conjunction with a General Permission Permit.

Asbestos is manufactured from naturally occurring silicate minerals which are mined principally in the USSR, Canada and South Africa. The three types of asbestos which have been used in the UK are: *crocidolite* (blue asbestos); *amosite* (brown asbestos) and *chrysotile* (white asbestos).

Once mined, the asbestos rock mineral is crushed, producing very fine fibres of varying lengths. It is the shape and size of asbestos fibres that enables them to penetrate deep into the lungs. Blue and brown asbestos are thought to be the more dangerous because the shorter fibres are inhaled deeper into the lungs. Asbestos fibres can split lengthways and then penetrate the lungs more readily. You cannot tell the colour of asbestos visually as it is often incorporated with other materials which disguise it. It needs to be analysed by a laboratory. All asbestos is now strictly controlled.

### Uses of Asbestos

White asbestos was commonly used in domestic appliances and buildings. Brown asbestos was used in thermal insulation up to the late 1960s and in various sprayed applications and insulating boards until the middle and late 1970s respectively. Blue asbestos, which has not been imported into this country since about 1972, was used for insulation lagging and sprayed coating. It is important to note that buildings constructed prior to the year 2000 may contain asbestos.

### Health Risks

The risk to health arises when asbestos-containing material is damaged or the material is drilled, sawn, scrubbed or sanded. Asbestos can be released in hot air heating systems and during the 'vibration' of structural wall and ceiling insulation panels. If disturbed, tiny fibres are released into the air, they can in turn be inhaled and penetrate deep into the lungs, damaging the delicate cells. If undamaged asbestos carries no significant health risk.

### Safety

Asbestos materials are identified within each council property directly using a label and/or as an entry within the property asbestos log. Do not drill, saw, scrub or disturb in any way materials that you are not 100% familiar with.

In order to undertake work in this property you must:

- Check the asbestos log book;
- Sign the property log book;
- Obtain a local induction to include actions to be taken in the event of a fire etc.



- Receive a permit to work from the head of establishment;
- Undertake any work in this building in accordance with your risk assessment findings and the detail of the permit to work.

### **General Observations**

Asbestos can be found in range of places to include:

- roof and wall claddings;
- flat roof decking tiles;
- flue-pipes/gutters/rainwater downpipes/airbricks;
- window boxes;
- cold water cisterns;
- roof slates and corrugated sheets;
- roof linings;
- thermoplastics and vinyl floor tiles;
- roofing felts;
- textured paints;
- insulation of warm-air heating systems;
- storage heaters;
- catalytic heaters;
- internal partitions;
- wall boards;
- airing-cupboard linings and shelving;
- duct and pipe covers;
- (LPG) portable heaters;
- ironing boards;
- central heating system insulation;
- filler ropes surrounding oven doors and solid fuel fires.

### **Asbestos in this Building (tick all that apply):**

- Asbestos has been identified in this building.
- Survey work has taken place and asbestos has not been identified.
- Prior to starting work you must consult the asbestos register.
- You can proceed with care but stop work if you discover materials that seem suspicious.

### **Actions if you Discover Suspicious Materials.**

- **Stop the work you are doing.**
- **Leave all equipment and materials in place.**
- **Unless it will cause further release, close any doors or windows as you leave the area.**
- **Advise the Head of Establishment of your concerns.**

If you have any questions about asbestos you should speak to your supervisor. If you wish further information on the locations of asbestos in this building talk to the head of establishment.

**If you have any concerns about the work you are doing – consult your supervisor immediately**

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Head of Establishment)

Establishment Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_