

Asbestos Safety Standard

The safety of our customers, colleagues and contractors is at the heart of all we do. We are committed to ensuring that arrangements to prevent exposure to asbestos fibres are delivered consistently to this standard, while meeting all regulations as an absolute minimum and best practice where appropriate.

This is our standard:

1. We have a dedicated Asbestos Management team working consistently across the whole business.
2. We have a comprehensive Asbestos Management Plan in place which explains who is responsible for the service, details our arrangements for managing asbestos and explains how we ensure that our staff are trained to work with asbestos.
3. In accordance with Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012, we review our Asbestos Management Plan annually. This defines in detail how we manage asbestos.
4. We employ fully trained and experienced asbestos surveyors and inspectors to undertake surveys of our properties.
5. Our in-house maintenance teams as well as other staff are trained in asbestos awareness. Asbestos awareness training is undertaken as part of the induction process for maintenance operatives as well as being discussed at toolbox talks. For other staff, specific training is provided according to their level of interaction with asbestos. Refresher training is undertaken every three years.
6. All external contractors working directly with asbestos are Licensed by The Health and Safety Executive for notifiable works or are trained to comply with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 for non-licensable or Notifiable non-licensed work. All external contractors working on our stock are Asbestos Awareness Trained where required. Details of their training are obtained at procurement stage. LiveWest Programme Managers are also responsible for checking that any contractors they are using have adequate training in place in accordance with the Contract.
7. We survey all stock with a built date of pre-2000 because asbestos was not used in construction after that date. Asbestos Management surveys involve visual inspections of all accessible areas and any potential Asbestos Containing Materials are then sampled to determine the presence of asbestos or not. We also undertake Refurbishment and Demolition Surveys to any pre-2000 property before the commencement of any major works or repairs which may disturb asbestos. R&D Surveys are more intrusive inspections of areas such as plasterboard walls to ensure that any planned works will not disturb asbestos which could be hidden.

8. We use a risk-based approach to set our programme of asbestos re-inspections. All communal areas will be re-inspected annually in line with the statutory obligations.

For our homes, (which fall outside Regulation 4) as far as reasonably practicable, we will attempt to undertake re-inspections on an annual basis where the property is identified as high risk, and within a 5-year cycle for other homes (medium and low risk).

For re-inspection, we will attempt to access properties 3 times. Due to non-statutory requirements to re inspect we will not use enforcement action to gain access. We will actively encourage customers to allow access and where access is not given, we will recommunicate details of the asbestos contained within the home, including location and risk.

The timescales are:

Risk level	Frequency of inspection and location
High risk	Annually. All communal areas and properties with high risk asbestos
Medium risk	Every 5 years. Known asbestos in properties
Low risk	Every 5 years. External parts of properties only Every 5 years. Night Storage Heaters, and cable wraps to incoming mains.

9. Other in-house technical teams also report back on the presence and condition of asbestos when surveying our homes.
10. Our policy is to leave asbestos in situ unless it is at risk of damage or is damaged. If we think that works are required to protect or remove asbestos, we will carry out these actions as swiftly as possible in accordance with the recommendations of the Surveyor or Inspector. If it is determined as a major risk, the Surveyor on site will isolate the area and arrange for immediate remedial works.
11. We carry out quality assurance checks on our Surveyors' and Inspectors' work. This is done initially by desk top reviews and secondly by a proportion of site validation surveys. We undertake site validations to ensure that any materials thought to contain asbestos are identified and sampled. We also check levels of customer service.
12. Our Asbestos data is maintained in our asbestos register which is held on our asset management systems. This data is relayed to operatives and contractors so that they are aware of the presence of any asbestos before working in our properties.
13. Asbestos data is also made available to a number of staff, including those in the Customer Service Centre. We provide staff with this information to ensure that they are able to pass data onto those who need it.

14. Asbestos data is provided to all new residents as part of their handover pack.
15. We manage our performance by regularly reviewing and reporting against a range of Key Performance targets:
 - a. number of re-inspections surveys completed vs planned number of surveys.
 - b. number of Regulation 4 inspections undertaken within the year.
 - c. number of domestic re-inspections undertaken on an annual basis.
16. We arrange external audits of our asbestos data and our operating procedures to ensure that we are compliant with all the necessary regulations.
17. We undertake audits of our external contractors' work. We undertake 15% checks of all notifiable asbestos removal works.
18. In conjunction with LiveWest's Health and Safety team, we ensure that any asbestos exposure incident or near misses are investigated. Our emergency procedures are stated in LiveWest's Asbestos Management Plan. Residents are informed as part of the procedure.
19. We provide an asbestos leaflet when a new resident moves into one of our properties. This is also covered in the Welcome pack.