

SP22 Asbestos Policy 2025



1. Scope of policy

1.1 This policy sets out how Soha manages risk associated with asbestos containing materials (ACMs), in buildings and premises under its control.

This means Soha will:

- Identify and keep an up-to-date record of the location and condition of asbestos-containing materials in all communal areas.
- Presume materials contain asbestos unless there is strong evidence to the contrary.
- Assess the risk of exposure from these materials and prepare a written Asbestos Management Plan.
- Implement and regularly review the management plan, including periodic re-inspections based on risk.
- Provide clear information on the location and condition of asbestos to staff, contractors, and others liable to work on or disturb it.

Soha is not responsible for the management of asbestos within either Leasehold or Shared Ownership properties.

2. Aim

2.1 The aim of this Policy is to manage our statutory obligations in relation to ACMs in order to comply with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012. In doing so we are able to protect Soha, its employees, contractors, tenants and the general public from accidental exposure.

2.2 Asbestos is a significant risk for Soha. This policy is designed to mitigate that risk which includes the threat of legal action, adverse publicity etc.

2.3 Asbestos in good condition and not likely to be damaged and can remain in-situ. Asbestos left in-situ within communal areas will be monitored annually and appropriate remedial action taken as necessary. We will, according to the risk survey remove all types of asbestos from our properties where it appears to be in poor condition or is likely to be disturbed.

2.4 We will apply our Asbestos policy consistently and fairly and will not discriminate against any person on grounds of their race, colour, ethnic or national origins, religion, sexual orientation, disability, gender, age or any other matter which may cause Soha to treat a person with injustice. We will promote inclusion and challenge discrimination.

3. Policy Statement

Soha maintains a comprehensive Asbestos Management Plan (AMP) in compliance with Regulation 4 of the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012. The AMP sets out how asbestos risks in communal areas and other relevant premises will be identified, recorded, assessed, and managed. It includes details of asbestos surveys, the Asbestos Register, re-inspection arrangements, communication of information to contractors and staff, and procedures for monitoring and review. The AMP is a live document, reviewed regularly and updated whenever significant changes occur, such as refurbishment or discovery of new materials.

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3.1 Soha will take all appropriate steps to comply with the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (HSWA), the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 (CAR), Approved Codes of Practice and related Guidance.

3.2 Soha will take all reasonable and practical measures to prevent the exposure of employees, tenants and members of the public to asbestos fibres when visiting, living and/or working within any properties owned or rented by Soha.

3.3 Soha will instruct competent persons to undertake risk assessments/and or surveys to properties where suspected asbestos/ asbestos containing materials are present.

3.4 Soha will keep a register of all locations, recording type and condition of identified and presumed asbestos.

3.5 Soha will take measures to prevent exposing staff, contractors or the public to asbestos material through the provision of information, training (where appropriate), instruction and where necessary supervision in line with the Approved Code of Practice, "Managing and working with asbestos".

3.6 Continually review and assess the condition and risk posed by any ACM within the portfolio.

3.7 All relevant staff will follow Soha's defined, detailed procedures where work is carried out to remove or contain asbestos.

4. Implementation

4.1 Soha will arrange for qualified asbestos surveyors to survey Soha properties, this includes the requirement to collect data on the location and condition of any material suspected of being asbestos. Any building constructed before 2000 that may be acquired by Soha, for whatever purpose, must be surveyed for the presence (or not) of asbestos material.

4.2 Only approved licensed contractors will deal with products or materials that have been sampled and are identified as containing asbestos that need to be removed.

4.3 After the testing of materials and if asbestos has been identified, Soha will inform the tenant(s) of the presence and type of asbestos found in their premises (if any) and provide them with suitable advice regarding actions and/or precautions to be adopted. Where asbestos in a tenant's home is causing considerable distress to the tenant, the Head of Asset Management or the Director of Property Services may in exceptional circumstances consider the removal of the asbestos even if it is in a good condition and not likely to be disturbed.

4.4 As a client, Soha will provide details or provide access to the Soha asbestos Portal of properties that contain asbestos to contractors working on Soha properties so that due care and attention may be given to safe working practices when carrying out any works within these properties. Copies of asbestos Refurbishment & Demolition (R&D) surveys will be forwarded to contractors prior to destructive maintenance works. Contractors are given free access to Soha's asbestos portal.

If, during any works, suspect materials are uncovered, it is the duty of the contractor or Soha Response trade operative to stop works immediately, isolate the area, arrange urgent sampling

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and inform Soha (as the client), their supervisor and residents. Remedial actions will then be implemented in accordance with Soha's Asbestos Procedure.

4.5 Soha will undertake Refurbishment and Demolition (R&D) surveys, to properties prior to having any refurbishment works carried out. This will ensure Soha Response staff and Soha contractors, are informed of any ACMs prior to works being carried out. In some cases Soha will allow the contractor to undertake their own R&D surveys.

4.6 The UKAS accredited asbestos surveying company that collects and tests sample materials should not be the same specialist contractor engaged to remove and dispose of the material due to the potential conflict of interest this may create. Exceptions to this will only happen with the prior permission of a Soha Director.

4.7 All asbestos surveyors must be UKAS accredited and on Soha's approved tender list.

4.8 The analyst and the contractor employed to remove the ACM must not be the same person/company. Unless agreed by the Head of Asset Compliance.

4.9 Soha will undertake appropriate asbestos surveys to all void properties (constructed before 2000). The completion of the survey will be undertaken in collaboration with any void scope which may require intrusive works to be undertaken. Where ACM is identified, and it is accessible and or likely to be disturbed the ACM will be removed or encapsulated.

Training

5. Employees who are engaged in activities that may cause them to visit buildings where asbestos may be present will receive asbestos awareness training in accordance with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012. This requirement will also extend to contract managers, supervisors, and relevant customer-facing staff to ensure they are equipped to recognise asbestos risks, communicate accurately with residents and contractors, and respond appropriately.

5.1 It is important that staff are able to recognise ACMs and they know what action to take should they come across it. Asbestos awareness training is provided to staff who could disturb the fabric of a building or other item that may contain asbestos. Asbestos awareness training will also be provided to those managing and arranging works, such as supervisors and planners. Training will be provided as identified on Soha's training matrix.

6. Resident Involvement

6.1 This Policy directly affects the safety of tenants in their homes. Soha will raise tenants' awareness of asbestos within publications and on the website. Where applicable, residents will be provided with information regarding asbestos in their property during sign up. In addition, Soha will commit to making asbestos register information for their building available to residents upon request, alongside clear advice on safe management and precautions.

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7. Appeals

7.1 Tenants have a right of appeal under Soha's Complaints Policy if they feel that Soha has not treated them fairly.

8. Responsibility

8.1 The Director of Property Services is responsible for overall implementation of policy. The Head of Health and Safety is responsible for implementing and monitoring the policy in areas under their control. All employees must comply with the procedures at all times.

9. Monitoring and review

9.1 This Policy will be reviewed annually by SLT (or in line with legislative changes). The next review date is September 2026.

9.2 A register of properties suspected to contain asbestos is held on an Asbestos Register. This will be continually reviewed and updated by designated officers. Consultation with specialist third parties will be undertaken during the policy review process as required.

10. Context

10.1 This Policy is based on the following legislation and Soha will amend it in line with any changes:

Health and Safety at Work Act

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations)

The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations

The Control of Asbestos Regulations

Workplace *Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations Landlord and Tenant Act

The Housing Act (Housing Health & Safety Rating System Regulations)

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