



ASBESTOS SAFETY POLICY

Lead Manager:	Compliance Manager
Responsible Senior Manager:	Assistant Director of Assets
Approved By:	STAR Board
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1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to outline Shropshire Towns & Rural Housing's (STAR) approach to managing Asbestos Management in properties under the organisation's supervision and control. STAR recognises that it has a duty of care towards employees, residents, contractors, visitors, and others who may be at risk from Asbestos fibre release in properties that STAR manages and controls. This policy offers a framework within which asbestos safety will be directed and outlines essential roles and responsibilities for the implementation of this policy.
- 1.2 The Asbestos Management Plan (AMP) will provide STAR's operational approach and policy implementation plan for monitoring and accountability, managing the asbestos register, conducting asbestos surveys, performing re-inspections, carrying out remediation works, and establishing asbestos emergency protocols.
- 1.3 The operational procedures in the AMP specify how STAR will fulfil the statutory obligation detailed in this policy, and as such, the AMP is enforceable through this policy.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral fibre that was widely utilized in building and insulation products until its prohibition in 1999. Asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) have the potential to release fibres into the air, typically when they are disturbed. Inhalation of airborne asbestos fibres can significantly increase the risk of developing long-term lung conditions such as Asbestosis, Mesothelioma, and other illnesses. Hence, it is crucial for STAR to prioritize the maintenance and protection of ACMs, ensuring they are safeguarded against inadvertent damage and disturbance, especially during maintenance and refurbishment activities
- 2.2 The presence of an ACM does not inherently pose a danger or risk unless it is disturbed or damaged. The potential health risk arises only when such materials are disturbed. This policy is specifically developed by STAR to establish a comprehensive strategy aimed at preventing the exposure to airborne asbestos fibers for all individuals present on premises owned or managed by the organization.

3. Policy Statement

- 3.1 STAR is devoted, as far as reasonably practicable, to guaranteeing the health, safety, and welfare of persons at its premises. A reasonably foreseeable risk of exposure from asbestos fibres exists in STAR managed properties. STAR recognises that it is the legal Duty Holder for its premises, and has an obligation to safeguard its customers, employees, those who operate in STAR premises and others from risks associated with asbestos fibres.
- 3.2 The Regulator of Social Housing and Home Standard demands Registered Providers to fulfil all applicable legal requirements for the health and safety of customers in their homes, which includes asbestos safety management.

3.3 To satisfy our legal duties regarding asbestos management, STAR will adhere to our responsibilities under the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 (CAR 2012). To conform with the duties in CAR 2012, STAR will:

- Carry out assessments to identify ACMs in non-domestic settings and regularly inspect them to identify any deterioration in their condition, enabling STAR to implement appropriate risk mitigation measures.
- Maintain an updated record of the location, condition, extent, and nature of the ACMs within the asset base.
- Provide relevant information regarding ACMs to individuals who are likely to encounter or disturb them.
- Ensure the engagement of competent asbestos surveying companies with expertise in conducting management surveys, refurbishment and demolition surveys, and monitoring (re-inspection) surveys.
- Ensure that any necessary ACM removal or abatement work is carried out by approved, accredited, and competent contractors, including minor asbestos-related tasks.
- Develop and effectively communicate emergency procedures to handle accidental disturbances of ACMs.

4. Related Documents

- The Control of Asbestos Regulations (CAR) 2012
- Health and Safety at Work Act etc. 1974
- Housing Act 2004

5. Scope of Policy

5.1 This policy applies to all STAR staff, contractors, and others carrying out works in STAR premises.

5.2 This policy applies to the following locations: -

- Rented properties including garages
- Communal areas.
- Offices and storage facilities.
- Commercial leaseholders where STAR retains the responsibility to maintain all or part of the building.

- Leaseholders and shared owners, living in self-contained accommodation, where STAR retains the responsibility to maintain all or part of the building.

5.3 We will undertake consultation as required with 'variable service charge payers', such as Leaseholders, on a works or contract-specific basis where works costs allocated per property are over £250, or £100 per annum under a qualifying long-term agreement. Details and procedures are within the Leaseholder Section 20 Consultation Policy.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 Accountable Person

Shropshire Towns and Rural Housing (STAR) operates as an Arm's Length Management Organisation, acting on behalf of Shropshire Council to oversee the upkeep and administration of the Council's housing assets. This delegation of authority is outlined in the Council's official policies, empowering STAR to manage these responsibilities efficiently. The Responsible Body ultimately remains as Shropshire Council.

6.2 Duty Holder

Duty Holder	Shropshire Towns and Rural Housing
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The *Duty Holder* is responsible for

- Management of systems and equipment, and for
- Ensuring that appropriate measures are identified to adequately manage risk within all premises under STAR's control.
- Quality assurance of work carried out on systems and equipment by STAR employees and contractors and that all works conform to the relevant requirements.

The Managing Director holds ultimate responsibility for health and safety across the organisation and will nominate suitably qualified and experienced individuals to discharge those duties concerning to the risks posed by ACM's.

The Board has the overall governance responsibility for ensuring that STAR is compliant with regulatory standards, legislation, and codes of practice. The role of the Board includes:

- Formulating key H&S policies
- Being cognizant of risks and risk controls in place
- Agreeing on performance targets and a performance monitoring framework

- Ensuring the availability of adequate resources and competencies for fulfilling policy commitments
- Ensuring suitable reporting and auditing activity
- Listening to the voice of customers

6.2 Under this policy, STAR has identified the following appropriate persons within the organisation to manage this area of risk with the support of appointed specialist contractors and consultants. Only competent and suitably qualified contractors will be appointed by STAR.

6.4 Policy Management and Assurance

Depty Duty Holder	Position:	Operations Director
	Responsibilities:	<p>Overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy and ensuring that adequate resources are made available to enable the policy objectives to be met.</p> <p>To ensure that appropriately qualified and suitably experienced people are employed to implement this policy, that appropriate programmes of work are in place to discharge relevant duties.</p>
Responsible Person	Position:	Compliance Manager
	Responsibilities:	<p>Ensuring the AMP is implemented, relevant, current and practical.</p> <p>To ensure that all activity required for compliance with this policy is carried out.</p> <p>Provision of quarterly performance reports to the Board as part of the governance framework.</p> <p>Reviewing the management plan every 12 months with all relevant parties to ensure the systems outlines in the plan are working.</p>
Competent Person	Position:	Compliance Officer
	Responsibilities:	<p>Administer associated contracts and act as the first point of contact for asbestos related queries.</p> <p>Ensure effective management of STAR's asbestos programmes and asbestos register.</p>

		<p>Guarantee that asbestos information is available for relevant persons carrying out work in STAR properties.</p> <p>Facilitating communication between the employees, contractors, asbestos safety professionals and residents concerning matters related to ACMs for locations within the scope of this policy.</p>
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7. Policy Equality and Diversity Statement

- 7.1 STAR is committed to valuing and promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion across our services. We recognise our duty to eliminate unfair treatment and discrimination in the services we provide, and to promote and value respect in everything we do. We expect our staff to share these values and treat all customers with fairness and respect. We also require our contractors and suppliers to mirror our values and comply with our policies in this respect and their own respective duties.
- 7.2 STAR will uphold a zero-tolerance response to acts of discrimination.
- 7.3 STAR recognises that customers have different needs and may require a tailored and reasonable adjustment to our service to access our services or a property feature, either on a permanent or temporary basis.
- 7.4 STAR will ensure it meets its duties under the Equality Act 2010 to consider the need to:
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation
 - Advance equality of opportunity
 - Foster good relations between different parts of the community
- 7.5 All contractors employed by STAR or carrying out works on STAR managed premises are required to adhere to the commitments we have made to valuing and promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion across our services.

8. Communication

- 8.1 STAR will ensure that appropriate asbestos information is provided to relevant persons on our website and upon request.
- 8.2 STAR will ensure effective emergency procedures are in place and that staff and contractors are clear on their responsibilities.

- 8.3 STAR will promote awareness of asbestos-related risks through training and induction of relevant staff. The training will be designed to fit the needs and roles of the employees being trained.
- 8.4 To ensure that appropriate and suitable training is provided to staff, STAR will carry out training needs assessments where appropriate.
- 8.5 STAR has adopted and is undertaking surveys in accordance with the Regulatory standard tenant satisfaction measures. These will be utilised to address any reports on outstanding works, issues or concerns that warrant further action or learning and will be shared with our contractors' delivering services.