

Asbestos in the home



Answers to your
questions about
asbestos in the home

This leaflet will help to answer questions about asbestos in the home. It explains what it is, where it may be found and what to do if you damage an asbestos containing material.

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What is asbestos?

Asbestos is a natural occurring mineral. Asbestos fibres are strong and resistant to heat and chemicals.

Building materials containing asbestos were widely used from 1930 to around 1980, so houses and flats built or refurbished at this time may contain asbestos materials, including some Sheffield Homes properties.

Is asbestos harmful?

Even if there is asbestos in your home, it is usually not a problem.

It is only harmful if disturbed and fibres released into the air which are then breathed in. If breathed deep into the lung they may stay there for a long time, causing possible lung damage.

People who have worked with asbestos for many years as part of their job are most likely to be affected.

What should I do if I think there is asbestos in my home?

You don't need to do anything unless you suspect the asbestos may have been damaged or is in poor condition. Generally if it is in good condition and cannot be easily damaged or disturbed it is best to leave it alone, as removal can lead to the release of fibres into the air.

If you suspect you have an asbestos containing material in your home in a poor condition please contact us via the North call centre on 293 0000 or South call centre on 205 3333 for further advice.



What should I do if I accidentally damage or disturb asbestos?

If you damage a material containing asbestos please make sure you:

- Don't panic, but leave the room quickly.
- Make sure no one else enters the room.
- **Contact Sheffield Homes via our call centres, North call centre 293 0000 or South call centre 205 3333** for further advice giving a description of where the material is and damage caused.
- **After normal working hours (8.00am-5.30pm), at a weekend or during a bank holiday please call 273 0101.**
- Do not attempt to repair the damage or clear up any debris using a brush or domestic vacuum cleaner, as this will release fibres into the air.

How can I reduce the risk of exposure to asbestos?

If you are planning any DIY work and think that asbestos may be present contact Sheffield Homes by calling our **North call centre 293 0000 or South call centre 205 3333.**

Keep any DIY disturbance to a minimum.

Report any damage to things that you think may contain asbestos to Sheffield Homes.

Where is asbestos likely to be found?

It is not always easy to spot asbestos containing materials on their appearance alone especially if they have been decorated in some way. **If in doubt you should assume that a material does contain asbestos.**

Common places where asbestos may be found in your home are:

Internally

- Artex / textured coatings
- Floor tiles & Linoleum products
- Pipe boxing
- Bath panels
- Fire / Heater panels
- Boiler flues
- Service ducting panels
- Heating and fuse board cupboards
- Toilet cisterns
- Cold water storage tanks

Externally

- Roof tiles
- Rainwater pipes and gutters
- Soffits & Fascias
- Garage / Outbuilding roofs
- Soil and vent pipes

Floor tiles & Linoleum products



Artex/textured coating

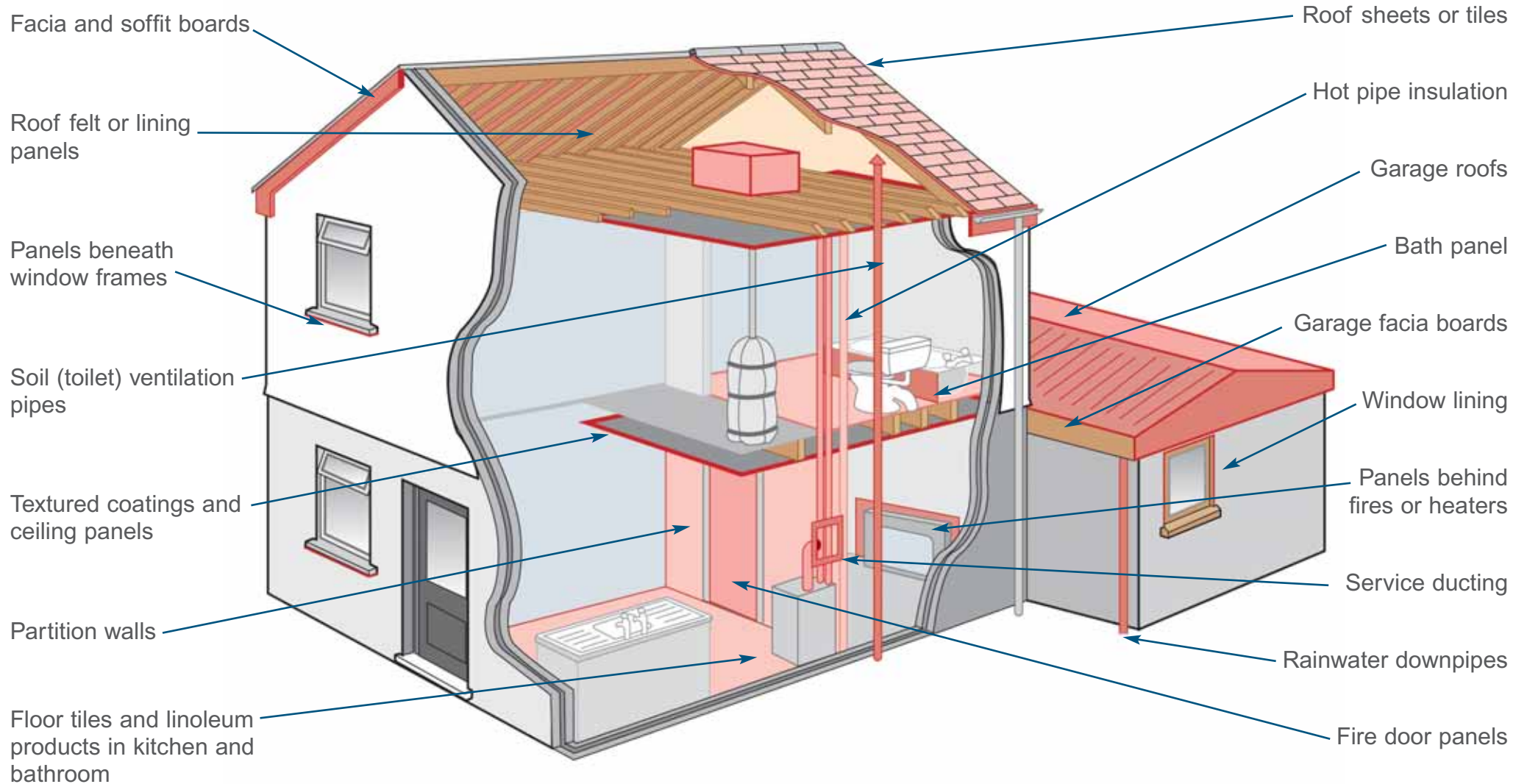


Bath panels



Diagram to show the most common possible locations of asbestos in a Sheffield Homes property.

Note: it is very unlikely that your home would contain asbestos in all the places shown in the diagram. The diagram does not show all possible uses and locations of asbestos materials.



How does Sheffield Homes manage asbestos?

Sheffield Homes aims to maintain your property to a high standard and any asbestos containing materials are most likely to be in good condition and are unlikely to pose any significant risk to your health.

We are carrying out a survey of properties to register where materials that contain asbestos exist. The surveys will help make sure that customers, contractors and visitors remain safe. We've now surveyed around 32,000 homes for asbestos and will

be carrying out the remaining surveys over the next 18 months. The programme consists of:

- A full internal and external visual inspection of your property.
- Keeping a log of the type, location and condition of any asbestos containing material found.
- Where an asbestos containing material is found to be damaged, then it will either be removed or sealed and made safe.



Will you remove asbestos if it is found in my home?

We will only remove asbestos from your home where it is found to be in poor condition or damaged. Generally it is better to leave asbestos in place and manage it as removal creates a greater risk of the release of fibres into the air and possible exposure.

How do I get a copy of my survey?

Where surveys have been carried out, Sheffield Homes will be sending out copies of these surveys to customers from December 2009 onwards. Not everyone will receive their survey straightaway, but these will be sent to you throughout 2010.

You can request a copy of your survey from your local Area

Housing Office, First Point or by contacting our call centres. We are also hoping to make copies of surveys available online later next year, please visit our website www.sheffieldhomes.org.uk

Useful contacts

If you need any further information about asbestos or have concerns you can:

- Visit your local First Point or Area Housing Office, or contact us via our call centres.
- Look at our website www.sheffieldhomes.org.uk
- Further information may also be found on the Health and Safety Executive website at www.hse.gov.uk

Please remember if you damage a material containing asbestos please contact us via our call centres, North call centre 293 0000 or South call centre 205 3333. After normal working hours (8.00am – 5.30pm), at a weekend or during a bank holiday please call 273 0101.



Things to remember!

Do

- Always wear protective equipment, e.g. face mask if you are doing any DIY work.
- Soak wallpaper before removing, if possible use a steam stripper and gently peel away the paper before re-decorating.
- If you think that an asbestos containing material has been damaged contact Sheffield Homes.



Don't

- Do not dust, sweep, or vacuum debris that may contain asbestos.
- Do not drill, saw, scrub or sand anything you think may contain asbestos.
- Don't try to remove old floor tiles or linoleum. Leave them in place and lay new floor coverings over them.

Contact Sheffield Offices

First Point at Chapeltown
Chambers Court, 1b Station Road, Chapeltown, S35 2XE

Wordsworth Avenue
333 Wordsworth Avenue, S5 8NH

First Point at Hillsborough
Unit 7, Hillsborough Barracks Shopping Mall, Langsett Road, S6 2LR

Stocksbridge
516 Manchester Road, Stocksbridge, S36 2DU

Darnall
Station Road, Darnall, S9 4JT

Burngreave
177 Spital Hill, S4 7LF

Firth Park Library (in-person enquiries only)
443 Firth Park Road, S5 6QQ

Sheltered Housing (mail only)
Staniforth Road Depot, S9 3GZ

Moonshine Lane (mail only)
Moonshine Lane, S5 8RE

Central Sheffield Office
Howden House, 1 Union Street, S1 2SH

First Point at Manor Library
Ridgeway Road, S12 2SS

Newfield Green
607 Gleadless Road, S2 2BT

Lowedges
88 Gervase Road, S8 7PS

Jordanthorpe
17 Jordanthorpe Centre, S8 8DX

First Point at Crystal Peaks
1-3 Peaks Square, S20 7PH

Woodhouse
5 Chapel St, Woodhouse, S13 7JL

Contact Sheffield Homes by email:
enquiries@sheffieldhomes.org.uk

Visit the Sheffield Homes website:
www.sheffieldhomes.org.uk

Some calls may be monitored by Sheffield Homes and its partners for quality and training purposes.



Need help accessing our services?

A translation of this leaflet is automatically available in the languages below.

Arabic

تتوفر نسخة مترجمة من هذه الكراسة باللغة العربية

Farsi

ترجمة ان برگچه در فارسی دستیاب است

Somali

Turjibaanka guub-yarahaan waxaa lagu heli karaa Soomaali

The information can also be made available in other languages on request.

Hard of hearing? All our offices have induction loops. Just ask at reception. We can provide loops for meetings if you let us know in advance.

Interpreters - If your first language isn't English we can provide an interpreter either over the phone or in person.

Visual impairment - We can provide you with information in large print, audio or Braille.



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