

# Your Guide to Asbestos

For Council Tenants and Leaseholders



In good condition, asbestos is not a health hazard. But if items in your home do become damaged or deteriorate, then you and others around you may be at risk from asbestos fibres in the air.



## What is asbestos?

Asbestos is a strong fibrous rock, which can resist heat and chemicals. It was commonly used in building materials between the 1950s and 1980s. Almost all buildings built or changed during this period are likely to contain asbestos. Products containing asbestos can look the same as those that do not. The difference can only be found under a microscope by a specialist laboratory.

## Am I at risk?

Before starting any major DIY activities you must obtain written permission from Taunton Deane Borough Council's Property Services.

Seek specialist advice regarding your homes asbestos content.

You will not be at risk if products containing asbestos are undisturbed or undamaged. In good condition, asbestos is not a health hazard.

If items do become damaged or deteriorate, then you and others around you may be at risk from asbestos fibres in the air.





## Am I at risk? (continued)

DIY activities such as drilling or sanding may disturb and possibly damage products containing asbestos. If you inadvertently damage what you suspect to be asbestos, leave everything in place (tools, ground sheets etc.), close the door leading to the room and contact us immediately.

### **Do not put yourself at risk.**

Please seek specialist advice before carrying out any work. If you are a council tenant, we will arrange to have a sample taken and tested to establish if it contains asbestos.

Further works can be undertaken if necessary. This service is free for tenants. Leaseholders must arrange surveys and removal themselves.

All work must be carried out by approved contractors licensed by the HSE for certain types of work.

Asbestos is not dangerous if it is in a good condition. We assure tenants and leaseholders that their health and safety is our most important consideration.

**You may like to think of Asbestos in the same way as live electricity...  
a constant presence in our homes and quite safe until it is tampered with.**

## Where could I find asbestos in my home?

Not all homes contain asbestos. Below is a list of common places where asbestos has been found in properties. This list is not exhaustive.

### Common places where asbestos has been found in properties.

#### Exterior of building

- Roof sheets and tiles
- Fascia boards
- Exterior cladding
- Guttering & drain pipes

#### Boilers

- Some interior workings of boilers
- Boiler flue pipes
- Linings to the boiler cupboards or doors
- Gaskets and seals

#### Interior surfaces

- Textured wall and ceiling coatings (e.g. artex)
- Duct panels (access to pipe work)
- Infill panels (above, below or next to doorways/windows)
- Panels behind radiators or heaters
- Floor tiles
- Suspended ceiling panels
- Underside of stairs
- Ceilings

#### Electrical

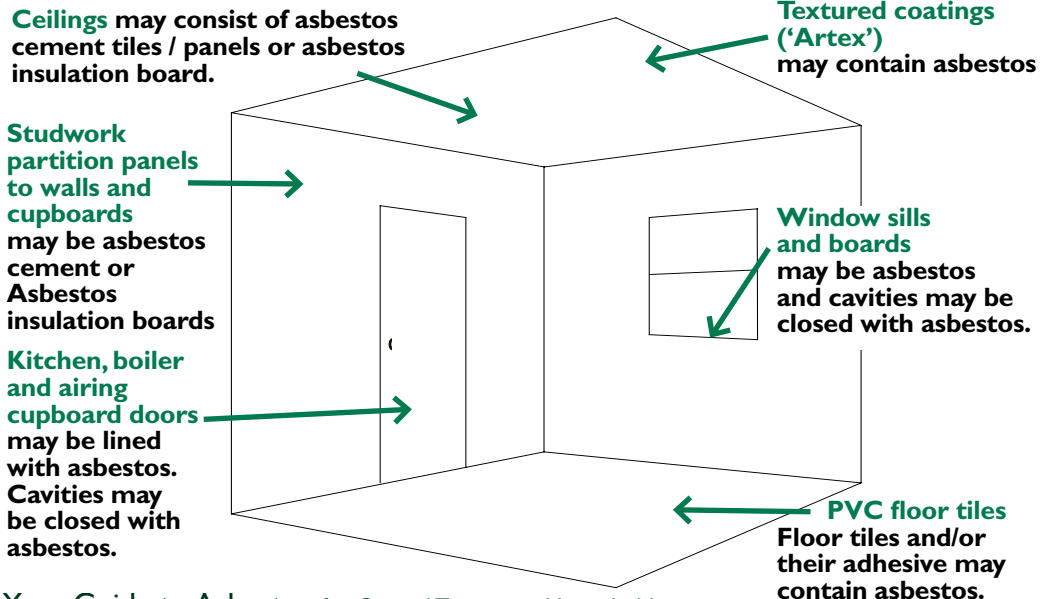
- Old fuse boards
- Storage Heaters

#### Other areas

- Bath panels
- Fireplace panels
- Pads underside of sink
- Water tank
- Pipe lagging
- Garage and shed roof
- Insulation
- Fire doors, loft hatches

All of the items in this list could contain asbestos and should be treated as such unless you know otherwise. If you are concerned about asbestos, please contact Taunton Deane Borough Council. Contact details can be found at the end of this leaflet.

### Where you might find asbestos inside the home



## Where you might find asbestos on the exterior of a home

**Roof tiles and especially cement roofing sheets on sheds/garages may be asbestos, roofing felt may also contain asbestos.**

**Soffits, fascias and rainwater fixtures may be of asbestos cement.**

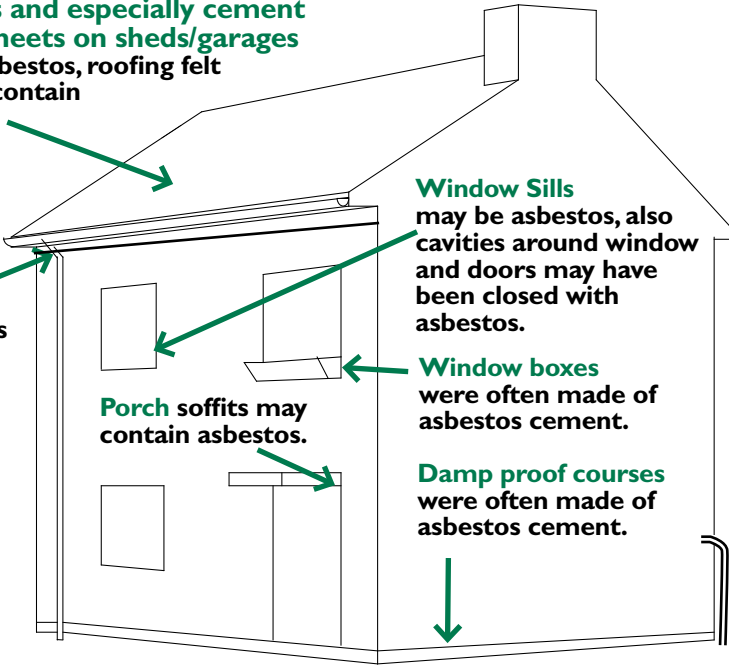
**Porch soffits may contain asbestos.**

**Window Sills may be asbestos, also cavities around window and doors may have been closed with asbestos.**

**Window boxes were often made of asbestos cement.**

**Damp proof courses were often made of asbestos cement.**

**Soil and vent pipes can be made of asbestos.**



## What is Taunton Deane Borough Council doing about Asbestos in their properties?

Taunton Deane Borough Council holds a list of properties where asbestos has been found or is believed to exist. This list is continually being updated as we carry out more surveys across the council's housing stock.

We are happy to share with you any information we have regarding asbestos in your home. We are also embarking on a programme of updated surveys and will share the results of these with you in writing.

### Where we think asbestos is present tests are carried out.

If the asbestos is in a good condition, it is best practice to leave it in place. However, if the asbestos is in a bad condition, it will be removed or made safe. Leaseholders must make their own arrangements for survey and removal unless the work is part of a major project. Where major projects are being undertaken, tenants and leaseholders are formally consulted as a group and advised on the full process such as how the asbestos will be removed and, if necessary, what precautions are needed and for how long.

## Services to tenants

Taunton Deane Borough Council provides a free survey and removal where appropriate service for council tenants. Please contact Property Services if you are worried about asbestos in your home.

When asbestos materials need to be removed or made safe, we will employ contractors who are licensed with the Health and Safety Executive. They will seal off the area containing damaged asbestos with an air tight enclosure if necessary. They then collect and secure the material under the Waste Management Licensing regulations. If necessary, an independent analyst from the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS), will carry out an air check to make sure the area is safe. All work is done under the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012.

## Services to leaseholders

Under the terms of your lease you are responsible for all fixtures and fittings within your property, including artex ceilings and floor tiles. Do not attempt any DIY on materials you suspect could contain asbestos without speaking to a specialist first. Property Services can offer information and advice but you will have to organise and pay for the work to be done.

Taunton Deane Borough Council remains responsible for the building structure and the asbestos in any shared /communal areas (stairwells, landings, halls etc.)

Remember that items you suspect contain asbestos are best left in place if in good condition. If you do have asbestos removed or sealed, please inform future owners so that this information can be passed on. Any asbestos removed from your property must be disposed of by approved asbestos removal contractors.

**Remember: Asbestos dumping is illegal.**

## For information and advice on asbestos

**Under no circumstances attempt any removal or work on items you suspect may contain asbestos.**

If you have any questions about asbestos or need some information and advice, contact Taunton Deane Borough Council Property Services.

### **Taunton Deane Borough Council Property Services**

Phone: 01823 356333

Email: [housing.maintenance@tauntondeane.gov.uk](mailto:housing.maintenance@tauntondeane.gov.uk)

Post: Housing Repair, Taunton Deane Borough Council, Priory Depot, Priory Way, Taunton TA1 2BB

Information and advice is also available from several other organisations:

### **Health and Safety Executive**

Phone: 0845 345 0055

Post: Health and Safety Executive,  
Rose Court, 2 Southwark Bridge,  
London SE1 9HS

Web: [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

### **United Kingdom Accreditation Service**

Phone: 44 (0) 20 89178400

Email: [info@ukas.com](mailto:info@ukas.com)

Post: UKAS, 21-47 High Street,  
Feltham, Middlesex TW13 4UN

Web: [www.ukas.com](http://www.ukas.com)

### **The Asbestos Removal Control Association**

Phone: 01283 531126

Post: ARCA House, 237 Branston Road,  
Burton upon Trent, Staffordshire DE14 3BT

Web: [www.arcaweb.org.ukdom](http://www.arcaweb.org.ukdom)

**For other information please contact:**

**Taunton Deane Borough Council**

The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton, Somerset TA1 1HE

Telephone: 01823 356356

Email: [enquiries@tauntondeane.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@tauntondeane.gov.uk)

Web site: [www.tauntondeane.gov.uk](http://www.tauntondeane.gov.uk)

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**English**

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**Bengali**

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**Chinese**

如果你要這文件翻譯成其他語言或盲人凸字、大號字、聲帶、或光碟，請致電我們，電話 01823 356356 或電郵 [enquiries@tauntondeane.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@tauntondeane.gov.uk)

**Hindi**

अगर आप इस दस्तावेज़ का अनुवाद दूसरी भाषाओं या ब्रेल, बड़े अक्षरों वाली छपाई, ऑडियो टेप, या सीडी में चाहते हैं, तो कृपया हमें इस नंबर पर फ़ोन कीजिये 01823 356356 या यहाँ ईमेल कीजिये [enquiries@tauntondeane.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@tauntondeane.gov.uk)

**Portuguese**

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**Polish**

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