PO32 Asbestos Policy October 2009

Approval

Approved by Tenants' Forum	September 2009 (Reviewed January 2011)
Approved by Board	October 2009 (Reviewed November 2010)
Due for Review	To be reviewed annually.

Review undertaken

Resident involvement *As agreed with Tenants' Forum*	Tenant Focus group in March 09 and discussion at the Tenants Forum in Sept 09. Reviewed by Portfolio Holders in December 10.
Equality Impact Assessment	Initial assessment undertaken by RS and AB. Approved by SL 09/11/09.
Other consultation	Consultation with Acton Jennings.

1. Scope of policy

This policy sets out Soha's approach to the management of risks arising from the presence of asbestos, in stock owned and managed by Soha, to staff, residents, contractors and the public dealing with asbestos in their homes.

2. Aim

2.1 The aim of this Policy is to protect Soha housing, its members, employees, contractors, tenants and general public from exposure to any asbestos material within Soha stock and to comply with statutory requirements.

2.2 Asbestos is potentially 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 Soha seeks, according to the risk assessment, to remove all types of asbestos from its properties that are in a poor condition, or are likely to be disturbed. The removal of the asbestos will occur in accordance with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006. Asbestos in good condition, and not likely to be damaged, can remain in-situ. Asbestos left in situ will be monitored and appropriate remedial action taken as necessary.

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

3. Policy Statement

3.1 It is the policy of Soha housing to 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.

3.2 Soha will conduct risk assessments/and or surveys to properties where suspected asbestos materials are present.

3.3 Soha will keep a register of all locations where asbestos material is known, or suspected, to exist.

3.4 Soha will take measures to prevent exposing staff, contractors or the public to asbestos material.

3.5 All staff will follow defined, detailed procedures where work is carried out to remove or contain asbestos.

4. Implementation

4.1 Soha's Surveyors and Technical Officers continue to survey Soha properties and this includes the requirement to collect data on the location and condition of any material suspected of being asbestos. Any building that may be acquired by Soha, for whatever purpose, must be surveyed for the presence (or not) of asbestos material.

4.2 Only approved specialist contractors will deal with products or materials that have been sampled and are identified as containing asbestos fibres 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 Asset Manager or Stock Condition Surveyor may consider the removal of the asbestos even if it is in a good condition and not likely to be disturbed.

4.3 As a client, Soha will provide a list of properties suspected to contain asbestos to main 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.

4.4 If, during any works, suspect materials are uncovered, it is the duty of the contractor to stop works immediately and report this to Soha (as the client). Remedial actions will then happen in accordance with Soha's Asbestos Procedure.

4.5 The specialist firm 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 Director.

5. Training

Employees who are engaged in activities that may cause them to visit buildings where asbestos may be present will receive suitable and sufficient information, training and instruction.

6. Resident Involvement

This Policy directly affects the safety of tenants in their homes. Soha will raise tenants' awareness of asbestos within publications and on the website. We will take each review of the policy to the Tenants' Forum for discussion and approval.

7. Appeals

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

8. Responsibility

The Director of Property and Development is responsible for overall implementation of policy. The Asset Manager and the Assistant Director of Customer Services are responsible for implementing and monitoring the policy in areas under their control. All employees must comply with the procedures which comply with health & safety at all times

9. Monitoring and review

A register of properties suspected to contain asbestos is held on an Asbestos Register and will be updated by designated officers. Soha will continually review and update The Asbestos Register as changes occur.

10. Context

This Policy is based on the following legislation and Soha will amend it in line with any changes.
Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as amended)
The Construction Design and Management Regulations 1994
The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006