

# What is **asbestos** and should I be concerned?

Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral which can be found in rocks all over the world.

Asbestos fibres are strong and flexible with excellent fire proofing and insulating qualities and were commonly added to building materials between the 1930s and the late 1990s.

Almost all buildings constructed or altered during this period are likely to contain some asbestos.

The three main types of asbestos which were used in the UK are:

- crocidolite (blue asbestos)
- amosite (brown asbestos)
- chrysotile (white asbestos)

White asbestos, the least dangerous of the three, is the type most likely to be found in your home. It is not possible to tell whether a material contains asbestos simply by looking at it.

Generally, asbestos is only a risk if you disturb or damage it and cause fibres to be released into the air.

If materials that contain asbestos are in good condition and are unlikely to be damaged then it is usually safer to leave it alone and ensure the risks are managed.

The greatest risk arises when materials that contain asbestos are sawn, drilled, sanded or scrubbed. Asbestos fibres released during these activities cannot be seen with the naked eye.

## Leaseholder **responsibilities**

If you are a leaseholder, you are responsible for the fixtures and fittings inside your home, including asbestos. You should make sure that you have any damaged asbestos removed by specialist contractors.

If you sublet your home, it is your responsibility to let your tenants know about any asbestos in your home and to make sure that they comply with all asbestos health and safety regulations when doing any work.

## Who to **contact**

**If you have any concerns about asbestos in your home, please call the Contact centre on 01509 634666.**

## Useful links

Further information about asbestos is available on the health and safety executive website.

Health and Safety Executive: Asbestos health and safety: [www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos](http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos)

Your guide to

# ASBESTOS

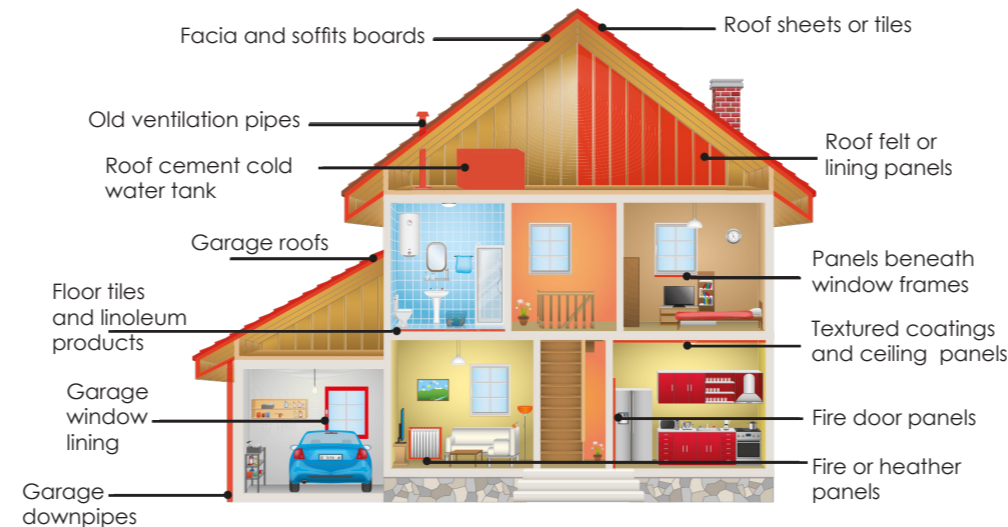
Charnwood Borough  
Council



## Asbestos in your home - **what are we doing?**

- We have surveyed our tenanted properties to identify where asbestos exists
- Where necessary we will carry out regular inspections to check on the condition of any asbestos that we find
- Before we carry out any major improvement work on a property we will do an asbestos reassessment survey
- We use qualified asbestos consultants to carry out all surveys
- If asbestos is found we will identify whether we need to remove the asbestos (remember, it is safe unless it is damaged or disturbed)
- If action is required, we use licensed asbestos contractors to either encapsulate the asbestos (make it safe) or remove it
- We have put advice and information on our website [www.charnwood.gov.uk/asbestos](http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/asbestos)
- We will provide advice if needed - telephone us on 01509 634666

## Where might asbestos be **in the home?**



Asbestos containing materials might be found in roofs, cladding, soffits, window cills, bath panels, chimneys/flues, water tanks, floor tiles and textured coatings (Artex or similar). As you can see above there are many products, however this list is not extensive.

## DIY and home improvements - **the rules**

- As part of your tenancy agreement you should never carry out any home improvements without first contacting the council and getting written permission.
- Once you have written permission to make improvements to your home there are a few things that you need to remember:
- Be aware of where asbestos is or could be located in your home - your asbestos survey report will inform you.
- If you hire contractors or tradesmen to carry out work in your home then make sure they have been trained in asbestos awareness. They should always check for the presence of asbestos before starting any work and they should be qualified to deal with it in the correct and safe way.
- If any material that you think contains asbestos is damaged during any home improvements or DIY work then please contact us as soon as possible for advice
- Do not drill, saw, scrub or sand anything you think may contain asbestos, remember that asbestos is often found in floor tiles, ceiling artex and bath panels.
- If in doubt call us on 01509 634666 - it's better to be safe than sorry.