

The  
United  
Reformed  
Church

# URC Thames North Trust

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To all Church Secretaries  
and personnel working in property  
at local churches

4<sup>th</sup> August, 2011

Finance Committee has agreed to offer to pay churches up to half the costs of an asbestos survey on your premises for a period up to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2012. The maximum grant available will be £350 plus VAT

Please note, latest legislation relating to asbestos was issued in 2006 with case law only emerging now. Information and guidance relating to the legislation was forwarded to local churches in January 2007 and is updated with this letter to reflect recent changes to legislation. You may also access the website to look at the Health and Safety Executive guidance document "Asbestos: The Survey Guide." - HSG 24 - (<http://www.urcthamesnorth.org.uk/trust.htm>) It is clear the local Trustees of the property (the Elders and minister for the time being of local church property) have a significant duty of care for church personnel, congregation, suppliers and visiting workmen where potential asbestos hazards exist. Further, it is the responsibility of the local trustees to ensure compliance with all matters of law relating to their properties. Synod is offering the facility to ease the financial burden on churches where the cost of complying with prevailing legislation may be burdensome.

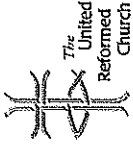
The latest thrust from Finance Committee is also to encourage all local churches to ensure they have undertaken all prerequisite steps required under the 2006 legislation by way of good practice. We encourage and exhort you all, therefore, to take advantage of this generous offer at your earliest possible convenience.

HSG 24 provides some indications of specialists in asbestos testing in various areas but do speak with The Revd David Skipp, Synod Property Development Officer to see if he might be able to recommend local specialists in your area.

Please note, retrospective applications for grants will not be considered.

For and on behalf of  
URC Thames North Trust

Fergus Urquhart  
Trust Officer



guidance. (See HSE guidance HSG 264);

- Ask for evidence that they have suitable liability insurance

## Types of survey

Local trustees (elders) must remember that the Regulation places a 'duty to manage'. This means that it is essential that trustees at a local level arrange for survey of all building stock and keep a record of any asbestos (an asbestos register).

The 2010 update has simplified the process a little by reducing the number of possible survey types from 3 down to 2.

## Management Survey

The purpose of this survey is to locate and assess the extent of asbestos containing materials (ACMs) and their condition. It is still possible to be presumptive in this type of survey, but it will usually include the need to be intrusive as material sampling will be necessary.

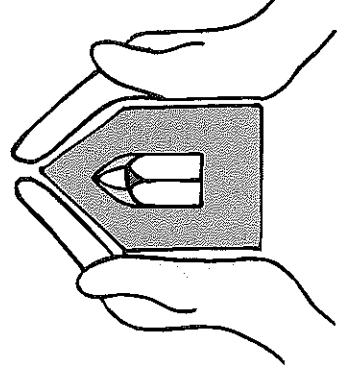
## Refurbishment or Demolition survey

This survey is needed before any refurbishment or demolition work is carried out. This survey is used to locate and describe all ACMs in the area where the refurbishment work will take place or in the whole building is demolition is planned. It will be fully intrusive and often involve destructive inspection so that all areas where the work or demolition is to be carried out have been surveyed, tested and reported on. This type of survey will lead to removal of all materials containing asbestos to be carried out, under controlled conditions, prior to the refurbishment or demolition work being commenced.

## Further Information

Further information and guidance can be found on the HSE website: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/hsg264.pdf>

# Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006 Guidelines Incorporating 2010 update (2011)



A large print version of this document is available upon request. Contact David Skipp: 01708 852338.

## Introduction

The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006 were updated in June 2010 and deal with the Regulations covering the prohibition of asbestos, the control of asbestos at work and asbestos licensing.

The Regulations prohibit the importation, supply and use of all forms of asbestos, continuing the ban on blue and brown asbestos and the second hand use of asbestos products.

It is important to note that the ban applies to new use of asbestos. If existing asbestos containing materials are in good condition, they may be left in place, their condition monitored and managed to ensure they are not disturbed.

The Asbestos Regulations include the 'duty to manage asbestos' in non-domestic premises. For churches this duty must be carried out by local trustees (usually elders).

## Duty to Manage Asbestos

The duty to manage asbestos is contained in regulation 4 of the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006. It requires the person who has the duty (elders) to:

- Take reasonable steps to find out if there are materials containing asbestos in non-domestic properties, and if so, its amount, where it is and what condition it is in;
- Presume materials contain asbestos unless there is strong evidence that they do not;
- Make, and keep up-to-date, a record of the location and condition of the asbestos containing materials - or materials which are presumed to contain asbestos;
- Assess the risk of anyone being exposed to fibres from the materials identified;
- Prepare a plan that sets out in detail how the risks from these materials will be managed;
- Take necessary steps to put the plan into action;
- Periodically review and monitor the plan and the arrangements to act on it so that the plan remains relevant and up-to-date; and
- Provide information on the location and condition of the materials to anyone who is liable to work on or disturb them

There is also a requirement on anyone to co-operate as far as is necessary to allow the duty holder to comply with the above requirements.

## The 3 essential steps

There are three essential steps to ensure that dutyholders comply with the Regulations:

1. **Find out** whether the premises contain asbestos, and, if so, where it is and what condition it is in. If in doubt, materials must be presumed to contain asbestos;
2. **Assess the risk**; and
3. **Make a plan** to manage that risk and **act on it**.

## Basic principles

There are a number of basic principles that should be followed when dealing with materials containing or presumed to contain asbestos:

- Asbestos is only dangerous when disturbed. If it is safely managed and contained, it doesn't present a health hazard;
- Don't remove asbestos unnecessarily - removing it can be more dangerous than leaving it in place and managing it;
- Not all asbestos materials present the same risk. The measures that need to be taken for controlling the risks from materials such as pipe insulation are different from those needed in relation to asbestos cement;
- Don't assume you need to bring in a specialist in every case, but if you do, make sure they are competent;
- If you are unsure about whether certain materials contain asbestos you can presume they do and treat them as such;
- Remember that the duty to manage is all about putting in place the practical steps necessary to protect maintenance workers and others from the risk of exposure to asbestos fibres. It is **not** about removing all asbestos.

## Selection of a surveyor

If you are unsure about dealing with an asbestos survey in-house it is recommended that you employ a competent person to deal with this for you. When making the appointment of a competent person you should:

- Ask for evidence of their training and experience in such work
- Check they are going to carry out a survey in accordance with HSE