

Shoreham-by-Sea Methodist Church

Church Council Meeting on 25th September 2024

Report on the Control of Asbestos

Purpose of the Report

The Church Council is asked to reaffirm the attached Policy Statement on the Control of Asbestos which was last approved on 17th November 2023

Church Council is also asked to confirm the appointment of Peter Bedwell as the Property Steward responsible for monitoring Asbestos Risk. Church members involved in the maintenance of the property are each responsible for ensuring that the Church policy on the Control of Asbestos is followed, and in particular that any persons carrying out work on the premises that might disturb asbestos are informed of the risk.

Background

Under the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012, the Church Council has a legal duty to manage any risk from asbestos in the church buildings. This was drawn to our attention by the Methodist Property Office who also advised that the first thing to do is to have a risk assessment carried out by a suitably qualified person. As previously reported to the Church Council, a survey was carried out at the Church in May 2007 by Hurst Solutions of Glamorgan who are experienced in performing asbestos surveys. There have been no significant alterations to the premises since that date.

Survey

The Survey Report previously shown to Church Council showed possible asbestos-containing materials in eleven locations, but in each case the likelihood of releasing asbestos fibres was assessed as **“Very Low”** and the priority for action as **“Low Risk”** or **“Very Low Risk”**. The Surveyor did not feel that it was necessary to take any samples, but recommended that this be done if it became necessary to disturb any of the locations identified (e.g. by building work).

Since the Survey was carried out five of the possible asbestos-containing materials have been removed, two when the kitchen was re-built in 2014 and three when the toilet block was refurbished earlier this year. The only place where asbestos might have been disturbed was in the removal of floor tiles from the toilet block. This was therefore carried out by a specialist contractor, ACM Solutions.

It is also now a requirement that the Church maintains an **“Asbestos Survey Register”** detailing the location and condition of any possible asbestos containing materials. Hurst Solutions have

provided such a document and this is kept in the Vestry.

Hurst Solutions also provided a draft ***Policy Statement on the Control of Asbestos*** and they recommended that a suitable person be nominated to manage Church policy. The Policy Statement was adopted by the Church Council in 2008 and has been reaffirmed annually since. A copy of the Policy Statement is attached. Church Administrator Peter Bedwell has volunteered to act in the role of Property Steward and carry out the suggested annual check of the possible asbestos containing materials and to update the Register accordingly.

It is important that if any of the sites involved are likely to be disturbed, then the persons involved (e.g. an outside contractor) is informed and that a plan is agreed to manage the risk. This will primarily be the responsibility of the Property Steward, but all trustees (i.e. members of Church Council) should be aware of the requirement and be prepared to raise questions with Peter Bedwell, as necessary.

Decisions required by the Church Council

Church Council is asked:

- 1. To approve the attached Policy Statement on the Control of Asbestos and***
- 2. To approve Peter Bedwell as the person with primary responsibility for managing possible asbestos containing materials.***

SHOREHAM-BY-SEA METHODIST CHURCH
CONTROL OF ASBESTOS IN NON-DOMESTIC PREMISES
POLICY STATEMENT

1. As part of its overall Safety Policy, Shoreham-by-Sea Methodist Church is totally committed to complying with the provisions laid down by the Health and Safety Executive in "The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012" which lays down an explicit duty to manage asbestos in non-domestic premises.
2. Shoreham-by-Sea Methodist Church acknowledges the health hazards arising from exposure to asbestos and will protect those employees and other persons potentially exposed so far as is reasonably practicable. We will systematically identify premises and equipment, which have asbestos containing materials within, and implement systems to minimise exposure through the effective management of asbestos-containing materials in our workplace premises. It is our policy that everyone who needs to know about the asbestos will be effectively alerted to its presence. No one will be allowed to start work that could disturb asbestos unless the correct procedures are to be employed. Shoreham-by-Sea Methodist Church requires the full co-operation of the staff and the officers of the Church in the adoption of this policy.
3. The person responsible for the implementation of this policy is will be the Property Steward nominated by the Church Council (the "Property Steward").

Arrangements for Managing Asbestos in the Workplace Premises

4. Asbestos-containing materials within the premises have been identified as part of a non-exhaustive and non-destructive survey, and will be managed to ensure the prevention of the presence of asbestos fibres in the air that can be inhaled by employees and others who may be present in the workplace. The Property Steward has been given the specific responsibility for the completion of relevant assessments and maintenance of asbestos containing materials.

Training

5.1 Shoreham-by-Sea Methodist Church will ensure that adequate information, instruction and training is given to those employees—

- (a) who are or who are liable to be exposed to asbestos, or who supervise such employees, so that they are aware of—
 - (i) the properties of asbestos and its effects on health, including its interaction with smoking,
 - (ii) the types of products or materials likely to contain asbestos,
 - (iii) the operations which could result in asbestos exposure and the importance of preventive controls to minimise exposure,
 - (iv) safe work practices, control measures, and protective equipment,
 - (v) the purpose, choice, limitations, proper use and maintenance of respiratory protective equipment,
 - (vi) emergency procedures,
 - (vii) hygiene requirements,
 - (viii) decontamination procedures,
 - (ix) waste handling procedures,
 - (x) medical examination requirements, and
 - (xi) the control limit and the need for air monitoring, in order to safeguard themselves and other employees; and
- (b) who carry out work in connection with the employer's duties under these Regulations, so that they can carry out that work effectively.

5.2 The information, instruction and training required by paragraph (1) shall be—

- (a) given at regular intervals;
- (b) adapted to take account of significant changes in the type of work carried out or methods of work used by the employer; and
- (c) provided in a manner appropriate to the nature and degree of exposure identified by the risk assessment, and so that the employees are aware of—
 - (i) the significant findings of the risk assessment, and
 - (ii) the results of any air monitoring carried out with an explanation of the findings.

Assessment

6. The premises (and equipment installed therein) will be assessed regularly to determine whether asbestos-containing materials are present. It will be presumed that materials contain asbestos unless there is strong evidence to the contrary. The amount and condition of the asbestos-containing material will be assessed and the measures identified to ensure that airborne asbestos fibres are not present or formed in the workplace.

A written plan

7. A written plan, The Asbestos Register, that sets out the location and condition of the asbestos-containing material and how the risk from this material will be managed according to material and priority assessments has been prepared and steps will be taken to put the plan into action. The plan and the arrangements will be reviewed at twelve monthly intervals, or when there has been a significant change to the premises, organisation or personnel *or* where new information becomes available that suggests that the original assessment is no longer suitable and sufficient.

Control of access to asbestos-containing materials

8. Access to asbestos-containing materials in the premises will be controlled so as to prevent inadvertent disturbance of the material and the release of asbestos fibres. A site plan and register showing the location of all asbestos-containing materials and presumed asbestos-containing materials will be made available. The Property Steward will ensure that systems are put in place to ensure that anyone liable to disturb asbestos-containing materials is made aware of its location.

Monitoring and maintenance

9. The condition of all asbestos-containing materials or materials suspected of containing asbestos will be inspected at agreed intervals to ascertain that there has been no damage or deterioration. Where damage or deterioration is found the asbestos-containing material will be reassessed and repaired or removed as appropriate. The plan will be amended, as appropriate, to reflect the current state of knowledge.

Asbestos-related emergencies

10. Procedures, including the provision of information and warning systems, to deal with asbestos-related incidents, will be in place, unless there is only a slight risk to the health of employees.

Arrangements for Controlling Work on Asbestos in the Workplace Premises

11. Anyone working on, or removing asbestos-containing materials will be controlled to ensure that adequate precautions are taken to prevent the release of asbestos fibres. Where work on asbestos insulation, asbestos coating or asbestos insulating board is to be carried out a contractor licensed under

The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006 (as amended) will be employed, unless the work is exempted from the Regulations.

Selection and control of contractors to work on asbestos-containing materials

12. When contractors are engaged to work in the premises adequate steps will be taken to ensure the contractors are competent and have sufficient skills and knowledge to do the job safely and without risks to health. The Property Steward will ensure that only contractors licensed under the The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 will be used for the removal of asbestos insulation, asbestos, asbestos coating or asbestos insulating board.

13. Contractors hired to carry out building or allied trade work that will involve minor work with asbestos must comply with The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 and employ the procedures set out in Health and Safety Executive Publication HSG210: Asbestos Essentials Task Manuals. When any contractor who may do work on the premises, arrives on the site they must report to the Property Steward or a specified contact, where they will exchange information relating to the task in hand and any resultant risks. Where significant risk to Church personnel or others is identified, a permit to work system will be operated.

Control of minor work on asbestos-containing materials

14. Maintenance workers and other employees can carry out minor work of limited duration with asbestos-containing materials, or work with asbestos cement, and asbestos-containing articles made of rubber, plastic, resin or bitumen, or work with asbestos insulation, asbestos coating and asbestos insulating board. Before work is carried out, an assessment of the potential exposure to asbestos will be carried out and a written plan of the work to be carried out prepared. Employees will be provided with information, instruction and training; they will follow the written plan and use the appropriate control measures. Where personnel undertaking this activity are within the employ of Shoreham-by-Sea Methodist Church records of this work detailing its nature and duration are to be recorded on employee's personal file.

Procedure for Dealing with Suspected Asbestos Containing Materials

15. If an item (or items) is suspected to contain asbestos and is not already part of The Asbestos Register then the Property Steward should be notified immediately and actions taken according to paragraph 18 "SAFE SYSTEM OF WORK". The procedures set out in the Asbestos Management Plan will then be implemented by the Property Steward

Procedures for Dealing with Health and Safety Issues

16. Where an employee raises a problem related to health and safety in the use of asbestos, the Church will:

- (a) take all necessary steps to investigate the circumstances
- (b) take corrective measures where appropriate, and
- (c) advise the employee of actions taken.

17. Where a problem arises in the condition of asbestos-containing material in the premises or during work with an asbestos-containing material, the employee must:

- inform the Church Property Secretary immediately,
- take all reasonable steps to prevent himself/herself, and others being exposed to asbestos fibres
- in the case of an accident or emergency, respond quickly to ensure effective treatment.

Safe System Of Work

18. Asbestos is only hazardous to the employee and others if asbestos fibres are inhaled (or ingested). The formation of airborne asbestos fibres can be prevented if the asbestos-containing materials in the premises are maintained in good condition and not damaged. This can be achieved if you:
- do not carry out any work on the fabric of the premises without consulting the Property Steward
 - do not work upon asbestos-containing material without an assessment of the risk
 - refer to HSG210 “Asbestos Essentials: Task Manual”, prior to carrying out works.
 - follow the written plan at work
 - use the control measures identified as necessary to carry out the work without risk to health, and
 - report any damage or deterioration of asbestos-containing materials or any incidents during work with asbestos.
 - report any additional or suspected asbestos finds of asbestos containing material.

Communication

19. A copy of this policy statement is to be placed on the Church notice board. All contractors working on site are to be issued with a copy of this document *and are to sign as having read and understood it* prior to commencement of any work. The Asbestos Register can and must be reviewed to allow familiarisation with all asbestos-containing materials, by all staff and officers. Contact the Property Steward to review The Asbestos Register.

Review

20. This policy statement will be reviewed annually, or more frequently if required by changes in legislation, church procedures or state of knowledge.
Policy authorised for use at Shoreham-by-Sea Methodist Church.

Signed and dated:

Date: 25th September 2024

Name: Rev'd Ian Couchman

Position: Chair of Church Trustees