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# Asbestos in Church Buildings

Thu 15th January 2015

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Asbestos has been used frequently over the years in most churches and, potentially, is a serious health risk. It is important that all asbestos is identified, its condition is monitored and any risk is managed. As long as these steps are taken, asbestos may not have to be removed. However, the identification of high risk asbestos, or where it is in poor condition, will require removal.

PCC's are responsible for ensuring any risk is identified and managed, the following practice is required:

- Identification of where asbestos is present, its quantity and present condition. An independent survey by someone accredited to make such inspections is recommended, and is required where asbestos is known to be present.
- Creation of a Register for existing asbestos and a Management Plan to assess any changes in its condition. The Register will refer to the location, condition, type and form of asbestos. It is recommended that the PCC identify someone within the church to inspect the condition of the asbestos every six months. Any change in condition will require independent advice on the necessary action.
- A Risk Assessment is produced in the light of the information in the Register and anyone working in the vicinity of it is to be informed.

Where a number of local churches require an independent survey, a co-ordinated approach may result in lower charges being negotiated. This is something that could work very well at a Deanery level and if a number of churches do want to club together for a survey, we advise the Rural Dean should contact the Archdeacon for a list of local contractors.

The regulations are set out in 'Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012' and the church's inspecting architect should be able to offer further advice.

*The Ven Andy Broom (Archdeacon of the East Riding), the Ven Sarah Bullock (Archdeacon of York) and the Revd Canon Richard Rowling (Acting Archdeacon of Cleveland)*