

## Asbestos issues in the 1960's council house: what to spot



### Overview

- Vinyl floor tiles or bitumen to floors
- Cement external soffits
- Downpipes or gutters
- Reinforced black resin cisterns
- Cement bath panels
- Cement water tanks
- Ceilings and covings
- Sink pads
- Cement flues
- Fanlights above doorways
- Fuse boards
- Bitumen DPC

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In the second in our series on asbestos issues in specific building-types, we'll be taking a look at the 1960s council house. Since the start of "right-to-buy", the 1960s council house has been viewed as a good property. However, as with most types of buildings, it pays to watch out for some key asbestos-related issues. Please note that the list below is most definitely not fully comprehensive as there could be many other possible risk areas!

When you're looking at a 1960s council house, look out for potential issues such as:

**Vinyl floor tiles or bitumen to floors**, particularly in ground floor rooms where there is a concrete floor-base. While this would normally be covered up with carpet, modern laminate or vinyl flooring, it can normally be spotted in **understair cupboards**. It may also be present as **stair nosings** and **stair skirting**.

**Cement external soffits** and **cement undercloaking to roof gable ends** (although these have now mostly have either been removed or are commonly overlaid with plastic variants)

- Cement rainwater goods such as **downpipes** or **gutters**
- Reinforced **black resin cisterns**

- Cement **bath panels**
- Cement **water tanks** in lofts, particularly where the loft has been installed after the tank
- Textured coating to **ceilings** and **covings**
- Bitumen **sink pads** to stop drumming when water is run
- Old boilers would typically have **cement flues** and may have rope gaskets

**Hot air heating systems** may be lined with AIB panels. You may also find these on heating cupboard access doors. They may also be combined with boiler cupboards.

Heating systems may also have **cement flues** running up into the loft up to the roof ridge (this is shown by a slightly higher ridge tile for exhaust)

Council properties with **fanlights above doorways** may have AIB panels and AIB panels forming riser ducts in bathrooms

**Fuse boards** which have never been replaced could contain a variety of asbestos materials – flash pads, fuse carrier insulation plugs, rope seals around the box itself and cement spark arrester panels inside the box

On the outside of the house, also watch out for **bitumen DPC**, **cement garage roofs** and **cement rainwater** goods to the garage, plus mastics to windows and **door frames**.

You could also be really unlucky and have pipe insulation or other very **high risk materials**.

***Please note:** this list is not exhaustive. Even if a property does have one or more of these features, it does not necessarily mean that they come with a risk of asbestos! With the right professional advice and checks, you can purchase and redevelop a 1960s council house safely and effectively.*

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01332 913170 • info@alverprisemanagementsolutions.co.uk • www.alverprisemanagementsolutions.co.uk