

NHSScotland Assure

Update on Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) Survey Programme 2023 – August 2023

Welcome to the third update on the Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) Survey Programme.

What is RAAC?

RAAC is a lightweight form of concrete used primarily in roof construction in the UK from the mid-1950s to the mid-1980s, although recent examples date back to the 1990s. We believe it was used by some municipal architects primarily in office and schools, but RAAC has been found in a wide range of buildings, which can be found in both the private and public sector.

The limited durability of RAAC has long been recognised and recent experience elsewhere within the public sector suggests the problem may be more serious than previously appreciated, and as such there is a potential risk to people and the environment where RAAC is located.

Due to the scale and age range of the NHSScotland property portfolio, it is presumed that RAAC is present in properties across the estate and as a result, action is required to identify and assess the condition of each instance of RAAC.

Scope of Works Completed to Date

In our previous update we advised that a desktop and prioritisation exercise had been completed. This has identified 395 properties across 11 boards which have been allocated a high, medium, or low rating regarding the likelihood of containing RAAC. These likelihood ratings have subsequently been shared with boards.

As previously communicated, the likelihood ratings are based on the desktop exercise and factors including age of property, construction type etc. and do not definitively indicate or confirm the presence of RAAC.

Board Requirements and Pre-Survey Meetings

The survey programme is now underway. Currie & Brown (with WSP as specialist sub-contractor) are in the process of contacting all boards included in the RAAC discovery programme to arrange pre-survey meetings. The meetings will include an overview of the survey process, any equipment arrangements, proposed survey dates, access arrangements, reporting methods and Health and Safety. Currie & Brown will also discuss any information which is required and/or outstanding.

Boards are required to assist in the following:

- Liaise with Currie & Brown/WSP on suitability of proposed survey locations including discussing alternative access locations if required. This may also include discussions around physical access i.e. WSP engineers will carry surveyors ladders however there may be instances where ladders are not suitable to gain access, which will be discussed at pre-survey meetings.
- Liaise with the Currie & Brown/WSP on proposed survey dates.
- Discuss any outstanding information requirements e.g. asbestos information.
- Discuss any alternate solutions e.g. there may be a requirement for further asbestos inspections, where information is not available.

Where possible the surveys will be non-intrusive, however, boards may be required to provide access above ceiling level for visual inspections if no hatches or alternative access is available. This will be discussed in more detail at pre-survey meetings. Please note that Currie & Brown/WSP where possible will avoid any area within the property that may cause significant disturbance to the operating functions.

Information Requirements

There are still a significant number of properties where required Asbestos information has not been provided. This lack of information creates a significant risk to the programme as properties cannot be surveyed without Currie & Brown/WSP being in receipt of this.

The below table outlines what Asbestos information is required and where a lack of appropriate information will have an impact on the surveys. We would request boards work with NHSScotland Assure and Currie & Brown to fill these gaps as a matter of urgency.

Document	Comments
Current management report.	Survey can proceed. Where ceiling voids are positively identified as being clear of asbestos, or asbestos is safely encapsulated and in a sound condition.
Out of date management report.	Survey cannot proceed. Without current information about identified asbestos we do not know whether its condition has changed since the original report was written.
Out of date management report + revisit reports for locations with asbestos identified.	Survey can proceed. Supplementing the management report with subsequent re-visit reports provides acceptable information about current condition of identified asbestos.
Revisit reports for locations with asbestos identified, but no management report.	Survey cannot proceed. Revisit reports confirm the condition of locations identified as having asbestos, but don't tell us what the scope of the original management report was.
Management report without location plans or with plans where the labels do not match the report.	Survey cannot proceed. If we are not able to establish where the asbestos information applies on the plan, then we are unable to make use of the information.
No documents provided.	Survey cannot proceed. We cannot conduct inspections in the absence of information.



Additional information that would be beneficial is as follows:

- Site layouts with unique building numbers / identifiers noted
- General building layout plans
- Building structural drawings
- Building elevation drawings

NHSScotland Assure will be making contact this week with individual boards to identify missing / incomplete asbestos information to address these gaps as soon as possible.

Contact:

For more information please contact:

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