vantify
CONSULTANCY

Asbestos

R&D Surveys

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What are Asbestos R&D Surveys?

Asbestos R&D surveys can be categorised into two distinct types, each serving a specific purpose and required under different circumstances. The two types of asbestos surveys are:

- Asbestos **R**efurbishment Surveys
- Asbestos **D**emolition Surveys

While both survey types require thorough and intrusive inspections, the techniques and level of intrusiveness may differ based on the intended purpose of the survey.

Both survey types are crucial for identifying asbestos containing materials (ACMs) that may be hidden or concealed. Unlike management surveys, which are typically non-intrusive, these surveys involve a more thorough investigation, ensuring that any hidden ACMs are identified before refurbishment or demolition works begin.

Understanding the differences between each survey type is essential for ensuring compliance with legal requirements, and for safeguarding health and safety during refurbishment/demolition activities.

Asbestos Refurbishment Surveys

Asbestos refurbishment surveys are required **when intrusive refurbishment or maintenance work is planned** within a building that may contain ACMs.

During a refurbishment survey, surveyors will intrusively access and inspect all relevant parts of the property in line with the planned works. This ensures that all ACMs can be safely removed (or suitably managed) **before works begin**, protecting workers from asbestos exposure.

Demolition Surveys

Asbestos demolition surveys are necessary **prior to the demolition of any structure**, including buildings, structures, or any part thereof that may contain ACMs.

During a demolition survey, surveyors will intrusively access and inspect all parts of the building which are due to be demolished. This type of survey ensures that all ACMs identified can be safely removed **before demolition begins**, protecting demolition workers and the environment from asbestos exposure.

Summary Table of Differences

	Management Surveys	Refurbishment Surveys	Demolition Surveys
Purpose	To identify ACMs and assess their condition, required for ongoing management of asbestos	To identify all ACMs to be removed (or suitably managed) prior to refurbishment	To identify all ACMs which are required to be safely removed prior to demolition
Scope	General survey of all areas which the client is responsible for. Assesses surface materials only (non-intrusive)	A detailed assessment targeted specifically to the areas affected by the planned refurbishment	A full, comprehensive survey of all areas, including the structures of the buildings due to be demolished
Occupancy	Can be carried out in occupied buildings with minimal disruption	The survey areas are usually required to be vacant during the survey	Due to the fully intrusive nature, all survey areas must be fully vacant
Timing	Usually only required once, with follow up reinspections where ACMs have been identified	Conducted prior to any intrusive refurbishment or maintenance work	Conducted prior to demolition work
Extent of Sampling	Sampling and presumptions are made	Extensive sampling; focus on affected areas	Comprehensive sampling throughout the structure
Findings and Actions	Recommendations offered for ongoing management of ACMs	Recommendations for safe management/removal during refurbishment	Mandatory removal of identified ACMs before demolition

Survey Limitations and Exclusions

To ensure a comprehensive survey and a final report which is fit for purpose, there should be **minimal access limitations** for refurbishment and demolition surveys.

All areas within the defined scope of survey should be accessible to the surveyor, as any areas which cannot be accessed could pose a significant risk if asbestos is present and disturbed during the refurbishment/demolition activities. Proper **survey planning is therefore essential** to facilitate a full survey.

Despite the goal of achieving comprehensive access, there are inherent limitations which may impact an asbestos refurbishment or demolition survey:

- **Concealed or Unidentified Areas:** Areas hidden within the building structure, such as those behind solid walls, ceilings, or other architectural features may not be accessible. Additionally, any locations not shown on building plans or detailed within specifications are likely to be excluded from the survey.
- **Specific Exclusions:** Specific areas may be excluded from the survey under certain circumstances. Common exclusions include:
  - **Areas Under Construction:** If certain parts of the building are undergoing construction or refurbishment at the time of the survey, those areas will likely be excluded from the assessment.
  - **Tenanted Areas:** Due to the intrusive nature of R&D surveys, all survey areas are usually required to be vacant. Any occupied areas will likely be excluded from the survey.
  - **Hazardous Conditions:** If there are conditions that pose an immediate threat to the health and safety of the surveyors, those areas will not be surveyed until safe access can be established.

*Any areas within the scope of the survey which cannot be accessed will be **listed as inaccessible** within the final report. These areas must be **presumed to contain asbestos** until it can be confirmed otherwise, which may result in revisits being required that could lead to additional costs and timely delays to projects.*

Survey Planning

The effectiveness of refurbishment and demolition surveys heavily relies on thorough planning. Identifying and addressing potential access issues before the survey begins will facilitate a comprehensive survey:

- **Extent of Survey:** Before conducting an asbestos refurbishment survey or asbestos demolition survey, it is crucial to **clearly define the full extent** of the survey areas. For refurbishment surveys in particular, a specification or a detailed summary of works is required. This ensures all required areas can be specifically targeted.
- **Provide Documentation:** Site plans are beneficial to identify all areas which need to be included in the survey. Floor plans (and any other relevant documentation, such as existing asbestos survey reports or registers) should be provided to the surveyor in advance.
- **Pre-Survey Coordination:** Engaging with building owners and contractors to identify potential access issues. This ensures that all areas, including those that are typically locked or restricted, can be inspected.
- **Specific Access Arrangements:** During the planning stage, arrangements should be made to facilitate a full survey, such as:
  - **Lift Shafts:** For accessing lift shafts and motor rooms, arrangements should be made for a qualified lift engineer to be present on site. This ensures safe entry and adherence to all safety regulations.
  - **High-Level Areas:** High-level access equipment must be arranged for accessing high ceilings, roofs, soffits, fasciae, guttering etc. This might include scaffolding or cherry pickers, with operators trained to use such equipment safely.

- **M&E Equipment:** Isolations of mechanical and electrical equipment should be arranged to ensure full access is possible during the survey.
- **Locked Rooms/Areas:** Ensure that keys are provided for any locked rooms or areas that require inspection. Alternatively, arrange for a designated person to be on site who can provide access as needed.
- **Property Structure:** Where the planned works involve removing part (or all) of the structure, specialist heavy duty access equipment may be required.
- **Confined Spaces:** Specific access equipment, training and control measures may need to be put in place to allow access into confined spaces.
- **Hazardous Areas:** Identify any areas that may pose health and safety risks and ensure appropriate control measures are in place if access is required.

Completing the Survey

Completing an asbestos R&D surveys involve several key steps to ensure a thorough and accurate assessment. These steps include:

- **Review of Existing Documentation:** Before the survey begins, the surveyor will review any existing documentation, such as previous asbestos reports, asbestos registers, and building plans. This information helps identify areas previously flagged for asbestos or those that require closer examination, providing a baseline for the survey.
- **Initial Walkaround:** The surveyor will conduct a preliminary walkaround of the property to identify any immediate hazards. This walkaround allows the surveyor to plan the best methodology for conducting the survey, ensuring all areas are thoroughly inspected without unnecessary risks or disruptions.
- **Thorough Inspections:** The surveyor will carry out intrusive inspections of all areas included in the survey scope. For each room/area, the surveyor will record general information such as ceiling, walls, and floor information. When a suspect material is identified, this will either be sampled, presumed or referenced in line with HSE Guidance, as follows:
  - **Sampling:** If a suspect material is identified, the surveyor will take a sample of the material (where feasible) for laboratory analysis. The analysis will confirm the asbestos type which helps assess the potential risks and decide on the appropriate management strategies. (Refer to Asbestos Sampling Procedures, overleaf).
  - **Presumptions:** In cases where materials cannot be sampled, either due to inaccessibility or safety concerns, presumptions will be made. Any material that could potentially contain asbestos must be treated as though it does until confirmed otherwise.
- **Asbestos Material Assessment:** Surveyors will evaluate the condition of each suspected or confirmed ACM in accordance with guidelines provided by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). This assessment will involve checking for signs of damage and deterioration.
- **Asbestos Priority Assessment:** Priority assessments are usually not required for R&D surveys. R&D surveys aim to identify all asbestos in the specific areas of the building affected by the refurbishment or demolition work. Since all ACMs in these areas will be removed, a priority assessment (which ranks the likelihood of disturbance during normal occupancy) is unnecessary.

Asbestos Sampling Procedures

To ensure the safety of surveyors and others during sampling, the following procedures have been established in line with HSE guidance and our internally UKAS-accredited protocols:

- **Restrict Access:** If the material being sampled is likely to release fibres into the air, access will be restricted to the surveyor(s) only. Anyone occupying the area (or immediate surrounding areas) will be asked to vacate for a short period of time while sampling is completed.

- **Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** If the material being sampled is likely to release fibres into the air, the surveyor(s) will wear appropriate PPE and RPE.
- **Material Suppressing:** Porous materials will be dampened using a fibre suppressant solution applied via a hand spray. The fibrous surfaces of exposed materials will also be dampened continuously throughout the sampling procedure to further minimise fibre release.
- **Sample Collection Process:** To prevent the spread of debris, samples will be placed into sealable bags using appropriate hand tools, such as a sharp knife or chisel. The sample bag will be placed as close as possible to the material or taped beneath the sampling area. This ensures that both the sample and any loose debris are captured directly into the bag.
- **Repair of Sampled Areas:** After sampling, the disturbed area of the material will be repaired using suitable filler, sealant, or tape. This repair helps to adequately cover the sample area and prevents further damage or fibre release. Pre-existing damage to materials will only be repaired if it is minor and appropriate for the situation.
- **Protection of Surfaces During Sampling:** Where there is a risk of dust or debris falling onto surfaces during sampling, these areas will be protected using a polythene sheet. For more discreet sampling, a wet wipe may be used instead and disposed of as hazardous waste.
- **Cleaning Up Dust and Debris:** Any visible dust or debris generated during sampling will be cleaned using wet wipes or tack rags and disposed of as hazardous waste.
- **Cleaning Sampling Tools:** All tools and equipment used during sampling will be cleaned thoroughly with wet wipes or tack rags after use, ensuring no asbestos fibres are left on the equipment.
- **Disposal of Contaminated Materials:** All used wet wipes, tack rags, and any contaminated materials will be placed into self-sealing polythene bags and disposed of as asbestos waste in accordance with regulations.
- **Occasional Sampling of Non-Asbestos Materials:** Occasionally, samples of visibly non-asbestos materials (e.g. 'Supalux' insulating board) will be taken to provide results that rule out asbestos content, ensuring accuracy and thoroughness in the survey process.

The Final Report

Once the survey is complete, a comprehensive report is generated. The report will include:

- **Asbestos Findings Summary:** An overview of the number of identified asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) found during the survey.
- **Remedial Actions Summary:** Summarises the remedial actions required, such as ACMs which require removal.
- **Asbestos Locations Summary:** Provides a detailed list of all areas where ACMs were found, making it easy to reference specific locations within the building.
- **Non-Accessed Areas Summary:** Lists all areas that could not be accessed during the survey. These areas are presumed to contain asbestos until proven otherwise, highlighting the need for follow-up inspections or alternative access arrangements.
- **Scope of Survey:** This section describes the full extent of the survey, as agreed with the client at the planning stage.
- **Asbestos Register:** A comprehensive list of all ACMs found during the survey. Each entry includes information on location, type, condition, and any associated risks. The asbestos register is a vital tool for managing ACMs over time.
- **Standard Survey Limitations:** Describes the inherent limitations of the survey, such as inaccessible areas and any restrictions due to health and safety concerns.
- **Agreed Exclusions:** Details any specific areas or items that were intentionally excluded from the survey based on agreements with the client, ensuring clarity on the scope and focus of the inspection.

- **Asbestos Material Assessments:** Provides a detailed evaluation of each identified ACM with photos, assessing its current condition and overall risk of fibre release. This helps prioritise remedial actions.
- **Non-Asbestos Sample Register:** Lists all samples that were taken but confirmed not to contain asbestos. This register provides assurance that certain materials were analysed and found to be safe.
- **Accessed Areas Register:** Lists all areas that were accessed during the survey, confirming the extent of the inspection. This register helps demonstrate the thoroughness of the survey and assists in managing future inspections.
- **Floor Plans:** Visual representations of the building, with the locations of ACMs clearly marked. Floor plans make it easier to understand where ACMs are located within the property and support the effective planning of remedial actions.
- **Certificates of Analysis:** Laboratory certificates confirming the presence (or absence) of asbestos in collected samples. These certificates are issued by UKAS accredited labs and provide scientific validation of the survey findings.

Conclusion

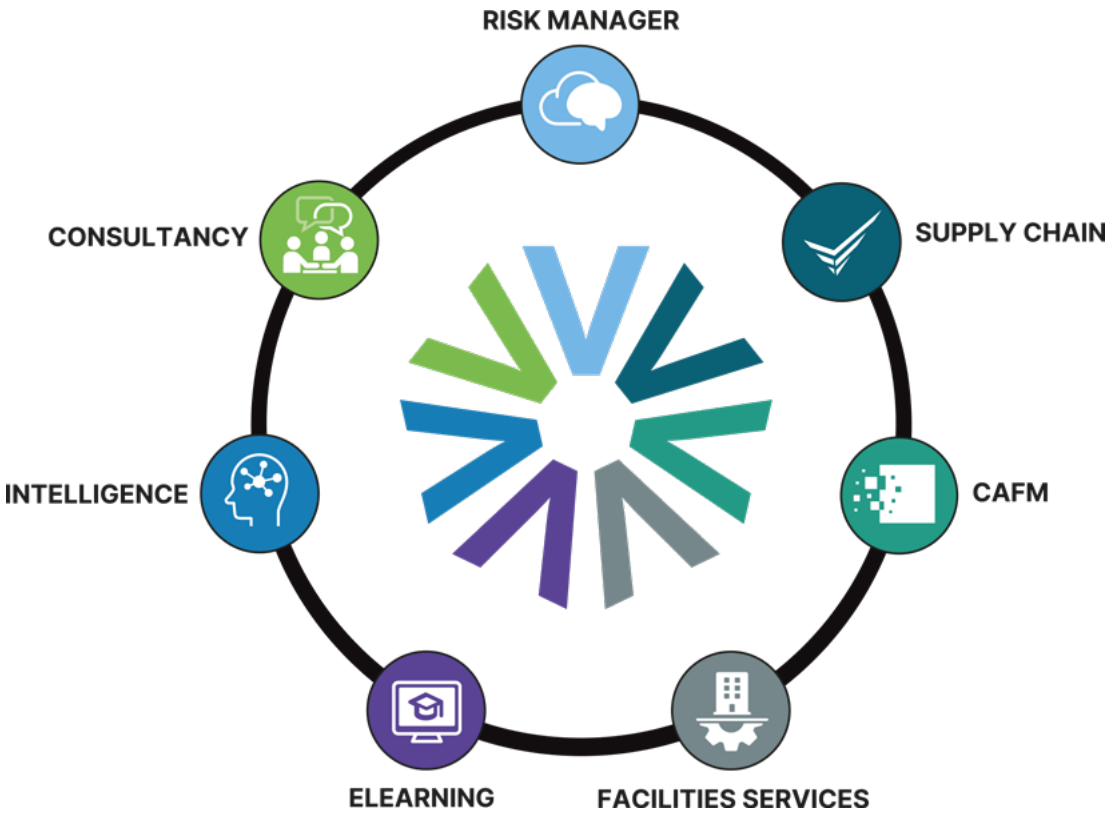
Asbestos management surveys are essential for compliance with health and safety regulations, including the Control of Asbestos Regulations in the UK, which require duty holders to manage the risks associated with asbestos.

By identifying and evaluating the condition of ACMs through completing an asbestos management survey, the duty holder can make informed decisions to protect staff, building occupants and workers from the harmful effects of asbestos exposure.

Vantify Consultancy is accredited by UKAS to undertake Management, Refurbishment, Demolition & Reinspection Surveys in domestic, commercial and industrial properties.

If you require an asbestos survey, guidance or advice, please contact us.

The Vantify Ecosystem



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William Martin, Meridian, Prosure360, and Elogs have joined forces to create Vantify® - our unified ecosystem that provides a single vantage point for compliance and risk management.