

Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown MP
Chair, Public Accounts Committee
House of Commons

30 January 2026

Dear Sir Geoffrey,

Restoration and Renewal of the Palace of Westminster

As part of its work on the Restoration and Renewal (R&R) Programme, the previous Chair of the Public Accounts Committee requested, in a letter to us dated 17 November 2023, that the Committee be updated annually on progress with identifying and dealing with asbestos and Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) on the Parliamentary Estate.¹ We agreed, in the response dated 31 January 2024, to provide the Committee with an annual update on these matters for the duration of the Committee's inquiry into R&R.² In keeping with this commitment, this letter provides an update on asbestos incidents and RAAC on the Estate one year since this information was last shared with the Committee. Information is given in the same format as previous correspondence on these matters.

Asbestos related incidents (since 31 January 2025):

Date	Location	Incident	Action
May 2025	Palace of Westminster	Damage was identified to the protective sheeting used to segregate the asbestos containing material (ACM) contaminated area. No exposure, so incident did not meet reporting criteria defined within RIDDOR Regulations.	- Work stopped and area restricted immediately. - Air monitoring (no elevated levels detected). - Sheet repaired and additional warning signage erected.
May 2025	Palace of Westminster	ACM damaged accidentally, with subsequent clean up undertaken without sufficient controls. No exposure, so incident did not meet reporting criteria defined within RIDDOR Regulations.	- Room segregated. - Air monitoring (no elevated levels detected). - Room cleared of all flaking paint and repainted.
June 2025	Norman Shaw North	ACM disturbed during intrusive works on Principal Contractor site. Potential exposure to operative(s) and therefore assessed to have met the reporting criteria defined within RIDDOR Regulations. Report	- Parliament held an incident review panel with Principal Contractor. - Site safety stand down undertaken. - Retraining and briefing to operatives.

¹ <https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/42278/documents/210123/default/>

² <https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/43214/documents/215076/default/>

		submitted by Principal Contractor as duty holder.	- Principal Contractor reviewed asbestos protocols and communication.
Nov 2025	Millbank House	Repair undertaken on roof without adherence to asbestos protocols by contractor. Material later confirmed not to be ACM; however, work methodology would have resulted in potential exposure had ACM been present. No exposure, so incident did not meet reporting criteria defined within RIDDOR Regulations.	- Material sent for testing and confirmed not to be ACM. - Retraining and briefing to operatives. - Contractor reviewed asbestos protocols and communication. - Retraining and briefing to operatives.

An additional asbestos-related incident was retrospectively reported in September 2025, linked to work carried out by a contractor in February 2024. The issue came to light when a former employee of the contractor—who had since joined Parliament in an inhouse role—recognised that they had previously worked on the system without appropriate controls, which has now been confirmed to contain ACM. The individual subsequently reported the historic incident to enable a proper investigation.

February 2024 (Reported September 2025)	Palace of Westminster	Works undertaken on steam system, without asbestos protocols being followed, leading to a potential, but unconfirmed, disturbance of ACM residue. Contractor assessed incident did not meet reporting criteria defined within RIDDOR Regulations.	- Retrospective investigation undertaken, followed by Incident review panel with contractor December 2025. Area has since been remediated by an approved licensed asbestos contractor (September 2025). - Air monitoring ongoing in basement area demonstrates no elevated level fibre counts. - Contractor reviewed asbestos protocols and communication. - Ongoing monitoring by Parliamentary Safety Team on protocols followed by contractor.
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Update on Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC)

Since our last letter to the Committee on 2 December 2024, parliamentary teams have continued to assess RAAC within the Palace and develop longer-term mitigation strategies.

Funding to address high-risk RAAC areas was approved in May 2025, enabling progress on procurement and further site activities.

As previously reported, all 16 areas identified in the 2023 study within the Upper Committee Corridor (UCC) and T-Block areas in the Palace have been temporarily propped. This includes 14 Member offices, three which are closed, four which are vacant and seven which remain occupied. A further six areas were subsequently confirmed as containing RAAC during the 2025 assessments, the most recent being within the floor structure of the UCC North Block, where asbestos was also identified. By contrast, surveys undertaken in the South Block, constructed in the early 1960s after the North Block, have confirmed that its floor was not built using RAAC.

To ensure the safety of all users of the building, additional mitigation has since been introduced, including the closure of areas where propping restricts safe emergency access and egress, and measures to limit pedestrian loading, particularly within T-Block WC areas.

The next phase will continue data collection and require more intrusive surveys to assess the condition of the installed RAAC including in the T-block toilets and office areas. In UCC North Block, this will necessitate asbestos removal to provide access for structural investigations, which is expected to begin ahead of summer recess. The resulting information derived from the structural surveys will support a comprehensive assessment of RAAC condition and defect severity.

Once intrusive surveys have been completed, the project will move into the design phase, with installation of mitigation measures prioritised and sequenced according to assessed risk. By the end of this phase, which is anticipated to conclude in late 2026 or early 2027, it is intended to return to service the first-floor toilet areas in the Palace and the second-floor link corridor directly above the toilets. This phase will also seek to restore Members' Office areas without the need for propping, through the installation of appropriate technical mitigation measures.

Further information on the remedial works will be communicated to Members and the wider Parliamentary community through existing channels later this year.

Safety Transformation update

The Safety Transformation Programme (STP) was launched in May 2025 to improve the culture, systems and governance arrangements related to safety management across the Parliamentary Estate. It was recognised that the culture and arrangements in place did not represent best practice and therefore to support the delivery of the safety strategy the delivery model for change would be a five-year STP.

The STP is structured into four workstreams focussing on: leadership, culture, operations and technology. There are a number of interdependencies across the House working with operational delivery teams and Parliamentary Digital Service to realise improvements.

There have been improvements across all workstreams to deliver target outcomes, this has included:

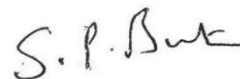
- Safety governance review completed and approved.
- Increased management information to demonstrate compliance arrangements provided to assurance bodies.

- Amendment of bicameral safety risk, improving understanding and response to safety risk profile based upon improved critical safety risk mapping.
- Forthcoming launch of new "safety champions" programme.
- Members' safety handbook produced in collaboration with the Institute of Occupational Health and Safety (due to launch February 2026).
- Improved control of hazardous chemicals across the estate.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Goldsmith". The script is cursive and fluid.

Tom Goldsmith, Clerk of the House

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S.P. Burke". The script is cursive and fluid.

Simon Burton, Clerk of the Parliaments