

# BRIEFING NOTE

---

## Reinforced Autoclave Aerated Concrete (RAAC)

Dear Accredited Provider,

You will be aware of recent safety concerns raised about the use of Reinforced Autoclave Aerated Concrete (RAAC) in public buildings such as schools and hospitals. Although RAAC is not thought to have been used widely in residential buildings there is still an expectation that a Responsible Person will follow appropriate steps to ensure the safety of a building.

RAAC is a lightweight, 'bubbly' form of concrete commonly used in construction between the 1950s and mid-1990s, either in initial construction or extensions or further developments. It is predominantly found as precast panels in roofs (commonly flat roofs, sometimes pitched) and occasionally in floors and walls.

RAAC panels are most commonly found on flat roofs, they may also be found in pitched roofs, floors or walls. RAAC panels are light-grey or white in appearance, roughly 600mm wide the underside of the panels will appear smooth, but the edges will be chamfered. The inside of the planks will appear bubbly, often described as looking like an Aero bar. Unlike traditional concrete, there will not be visible stones (aggregate) in the panels.

The government's advice to the public is not to attempt to identify whether there is RAAC in your buildings, or to assess the condition of known RAAC planks yourself. Due to the nature of the material, defects can be difficult to identify. If you suspect your building includes RAAC, then you should use a suitably qualified professional, such as an RICS chartered building surveyor or chartered structural engineer. Regular Planned Preventative Maintenance (PPM) surveys should assist in identifying and managing potentially defective materials.

The steps for an owner or building manager to take in identifying RAAC planks would include the following:

- Note that RAAC planks were used from the mid-1950s until the early 1990s, so buildings (or extensions) built before or after this period are unlikely to be affected. We appreciate this means the vast majority of PBSA will not be impacted by this issue but thought it appropriate to circulate information just in case!

# BRIEFING NOTE

---

- Check any records about the construction to see if RAAC is mentioned. But be aware that RAAC may not be mentioned even when it was used. Note that certain product names such as Siporex, Durox, Celcon, Hebel and Ytong are indicators of RAAC.
- If you do not know the construction type of a roof but it could be RAAC planks, then the roof should be inspected by a suitably qualified and appropriately experienced professional, such as an RICS chartered building surveyor or chartered structural engineer, who is experienced with this type of construction.

After inspection and identification, put in place measures to manage the risk e.g. temporary propping under the roof. The remedial works advised will be risk-based for priority and what is most appropriate. The use of the space beneath a roof will affect the risk assessment.

There is further information provided by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors at <https://www.rics.org/news-insights/current-topics-campaigns/raac-advice-and-faqs>.