

**Dame Meg Hillier**  
**Chair of the Public Accounts Committee**  
**House of Commons**

**12 January 2023**

Dear Dame Meg,

I am writing further to my letter of 22 December, which provided the Committee with information on incidents since March last year.

I have today been informed of an asbestos-related incident which took place in December in Fielden House and is currently under investigation. I have therefore updated the table I sent you last month, which is included below. Further information will be provided when available.

Yours sincerely,



Sir John Benger  
Clerk of the House of Commons

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**Clerk of the House of Commons**

Palace of Westminster  
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<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Incident</b>	<b>Action</b>
October 2022	Norman Shaw North	Asbestos containing materials discovered during ground excavation works and moved without necessary precautions to prevent fibre release. Risk of exposure judged to be “very low” and incident does not meet the criteria for reporting under RIDDOR Regs Incident happened within the confines of the CDM2 <sup>1</sup> area, with no interface with any house staff or teams	Works stopped and Principal Contractor undertook immediate investigation - Area sealed while arrangements for removal made - Incident being treated as high potential near miss - Strategic Estates as the CDM Client have ensured a comprehensive investigation has been undertaken by all parties and that the Principal Contractor has actioned the relevant findings and updated their arrangements to ensure continued site safety.
December 2022	Fielden House	An inspection hatch was cut into a ceiling without appropriate controls in place. Asbestos insulation lagging debris and insulation to pipework and associated intrusions was found within the ceiling void. There does not appear to have been contamination of the area and it is expected the risk of exposure to persons is low.	I have initiated a comprehensive investigation, to establish the facts, verify the initial assessment and examine the root and underlying causes.

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<sup>1</sup> CDM refers to the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015.

### Fire incidents

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Incident</b>	<b>Action</b>
October 2022	Portcullis House	Overheating Aquavac	Dealt with by contractors
November 2022	Norman Shaw North	Steam cleaning machine caught fire on scaffolding	Dealt with by Contractors
December 2022	Palace of Westminster	Overheated fan belt	Investigated by in house mechanical engineers
December 2022	1 Parliament Street	Item of clothing left on portable heater	Removed by Fire Protection Team, left with In House electrical engineers

### Stone masonry falls

There have been no reported incidences of stone masonry falls since 29 March 2022.