

## **SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

### **QUINQUENNIAL INSPECTIONS OF CHURCH BUILDINGS**

This has been prepared to help Vestries and Property Conveners about Inspection and Reporting to the Vestry and the Diocesan Buildings Committee about the condition of each Church Building, Hall and any Rectory, House or Flat in their care. It will help to identify any maintenance requirements and a programme of work to keep those buildings in good repair. Inspections should be budgeted for in the expenditure programme.

Contact with prospective Professional Adviser(s) should be made with an invitation to the Professional Adviser(s) to submit Fee Proposals for Inspection and Reporting. A Draft Reporting Template is illustrated at the end of this.

### **VESTRY RESPONSIBILITIES**

Briefly, Vestries, with the Rector or Priest in Charge, have a duty to care for the property and fabric of church buildings. Canon 60 in the Scottish Episcopal Church Code of Canons and the provisions of Paragraph 7.2.2 of the Digest of Resolutions of the General Synod require an inspection and written report every five years (Quinquennial Inspection) on the condition of each building under the Vestry's charge from an Architect or Chartered Surveyor. Where the building is listed it is recommended that such professional should be a Chartered Architect or Chartered Surveyor with accreditation in building conservation.

This should ensure early detection of deterioration or defects so that prompt action can be taken, avoiding later and more costly expense, e.g. replacing timbers affected by dry rot. The Report provides a 'snapshot' of the state of the church buildings and shows the extent of the care being given to the building(s). The Vestry can also use it to check on progress made in maintaining property.

A Copy of the Report must be provided for the Diocesan Buildings Committee.

A Vestry can should carry out and record more frequent (e.g. monthly, annual) inspections of specific items identified in the report for monitoring.

The Provincial guidance recommends a Report in the form below. It should be used by the Professional Advisers appointed by a Vestry, although individual Architects or Surveyors may adopt some variation; Vestries should specify the content to be included and provide the relevant information where necessary (e.g. in B1, B2, B3, B4, B6 below). It is recommended that a church member who is familiar with the church fabric is present during the inspection to comment on any current issues. It can be useful for separate reports to be produced for each building as in some cases they are managed by different people.

## **THE REPORT**

### **SECTION A BACKGROUND**

This Section shall identify the Commissioning agent (normally the Vestry), and list of any previous reports; the Name of the Inspector(s), their Qualifications and Companies, the date(s) of inspection(s), the weather conditions and any other relevant information. Scope of the inspection and limitations on access should be noted and any areas that are not appraised within the report.

## **SECTION B – INTRODUCTION**

1. LIST OF PROPERTIES with addresses and postcodes
2. CUSTODIANS: names of the Rector, Vestry Secretary & Fabric Convenor
3. BRIEF HISTORY OF CONGREGATION and current incumbency situation
4. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF BUILDINGS: Date of construction, Architect (if known), Listing Status etc. (May be supplemented in Appendix).
5. MATERIALS USED IN THE CONSTRUCTION and general description of built form.
6. PREVIOUS MAJOR REPAIRS: Description of and major repairs carried out in the last 10 years (from records e.g. Fabric Record book).
7. BRIEF SUMMARY OF CONDITION:
8. O.S. SITE PLAN or other suitable location plan [Scale 1:1250 recommended. The Inspector should be able to provide this if not held by church and may be charged as an expense.]

## **SECTION C – INSPECTION GUIDELINES** (for each building)

Some churches may not have all the elements (e.g. tower or spire, clock) listed in the following table and some may be inaccessible (e.g. the Solum - material underneath the floor).

Comment on the building services (electrical, gas and heating installations) may be general observation with a recommendation for specialist investigation if raised as an area of concern.

For ease of reference, the Inspection Report should preferably include a table listing each of the elements of the building with additional information as indicated below.

### A EXTERNAL FABRIC:

Roofs: pitch, materials, flashings, eaves, bargeboards, skews and any chimneys;

Gutters, downpipes and rainwater disposal systems;

Walls, including damp proofing and any under floor ventilation;

Doors and framing, including locks and other fittings, security fittings;

Windows and frames, including any security fittings;

Stained Glass Windows - visual inspection (detailed survey may be required from specialist);

Metalwork and woodwork, including condition of paintwork;

Tower, spire;

Clocks, bells and frames – visual inspection (detailed survey may be required from specialist).

### B INTERNAL FABRIC:

Roof structures (e.g. trusses);

Walls, partitions and ceilings - internal finishes (egg plaster, panelling etc.);

Doors and framing, including locks and other security fittings;

Windows, woodwork and fittings, including ironmongery and security fittings;

Internal decorations;

Floors, stairways and balconies;

Solum and floor access hatches;

Asbestos – each church should have identified the presence of asbestos and have a management strategy plan.

### C FIXTURES AND FITTINGS:

Furniture and fittings - Pews, Pulpit and Font;

Organ - visual inspection (specialist may be required to provide service report);

Notable Monuments (specialist may be required to provide report).

## D BUILDING SERVICES:

Lightning conductor - visual inspection (specialist may be required to provide report);  
Electrical installation - visual inspection (specialist test/service report), compliance with current Regulations;  
Sockets - condition, use of adaptors;  
Lights - type of fitting and bulbs;  
External Lighting;  
Water supply;  
Heating system and ventilation – visual inspection (specialist test/service report);  
Gas installation – visual inspection (specialist test/service report);  
Sound amplification and loop system;  
Sanitary facilities and hygiene;  
Drainage;  
Fire precautions (specialist may be required to provide report);  
Security (specialist may be required to provide report).

## E GROUNDS:

Including boundaries, paths, trees, noticeboards, etc.

## F ACCESSIBILITY:

Comment on provision and options for improvement to make the buildings accessible for all  
This section of the report should be discursive and cover the following:

1. List each element of the building;
2. Briefly describe it;
3. Assess its condition with brief description and any identified cause or defect and, where relevant, state compliance with relevant current technical regulations (e.g. electrical);
4. Give a brief description of any recommended repairs and their priority and any regular maintenance – Urgent (within 6 months); Recommended (6-24months) or Desirable (within 5 yrs.), and give an indicative budget costing;
5. Guidance on regular maintenance with an outline annual plan;
6. Photographs of specific defects and areas requiring attention, to be incorporated into the text or collectively at the end of the report, with suitable referencing to locations.  
Good general view photographs of exterior and interior of the church should also be included.

## **SECTION D – SUMMARY**

This section should be self-contained and suited to photocopying for general distribution. It should summarise the repair works requiring immediate action, essential within the next twelve months or requiring a specialist report, with a broad outline of the essential and desirable works.

It is recommended that this section be located close to the front of the report so that due notice is taken when reading the condition survey.

## **SECTION E – APPENDIX**

Additional relevant information to be included here e.g. Listing description, plans, old photographs etc.

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## **APPENDIX A – Other Sources of Information on Quinquennial Inspections.**

There are also other sources of information about possible details for inclusion in Quinquennial Inspections of Church buildings, halls, rectories and other properties.

Scotland's Churches Trust has put together guidance on quinquennial inspections and building maintenance (Search under "Maintain your Church" and "Maintenance Articles" on their website for their articles on inspection and maintenance:

<http://www.scotlandschurchestrust.org.uk>

The Church of England and some of its dioceses (especially London) have compiled advice and guidance on Quinquennial Inspections with items to be included. In the Church of England system inspection of church buildings is by an architect or chartered building surveyor ('professional advisers') approved by the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC). Website <http://www.churchcare.co.uk/churches/guidance-advice/looking-after-your-church> – see "Looking after your Church" under the Guidance and Advice section for Churches.

The Church of Scotland has produced instructions for their Congregational Boards about registering, maintaining and inspecting church buildings. Each Board must appoint a Fabric Committee, including or helped by people with technical knowledge and experience in dealing with property. The instructions specify external and internal features that should be inspected annually, their condition recorded and notes made of any work required, plus certain safety inspections. These records are organised and inspected quinquennially by Presbytery.

## **APPENDIX B – Professional Advisers.**

An **Architect** is a person trained in the planning, design and oversight of the construction of buildings.

A **Surveyor** (in this context) is a person trained in land, property and construction.

The Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland (RIAS) is the professional body for all chartered architects in Scotland. The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) partners with the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland (RIAS). Professionals are Chartered Members of the RIAS or RIBA. Some have additional qualifications. The RIAS offers Accreditation in building conservation which confirms qualification and experience for professionals in conservation work.

The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) is an independent professional body which regulates property professionals and surveyors in the United Kingdom. Professionals may be Fellows who may use "FRICS" after their names and Members with "MRICS" after their names.

If a surveyor is to be appointed to carry out the inspection, they should have experience as a buildings surveyor, not a valuation surveyor.

