

**Diocese of Durham**

**St Columba  
Hartlepool**

*Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1991*

**Quinquennial Report**  
on the architect's inspection on

**13<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

Archdeaconry of Aukland  
Deanery of Hartlepool  
An unlisted building | not in a conservation area

Incumbent - **Interregnum**



Report prepared by

**Sarah Harrison RIBA**

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## **REVISION C – Archdeaconry corrected.**

Date of inspection – 13.10.23

Weather – Mostly overcast, some showers.

Date of report – November 2023

Date of previous inspection – December 2015

### **PART ONE**

- 1.1 I have made a thorough general survey of the condition of the church and grounds. The inspection was such as could readily be made from ground level and ladders. I have not inspected woodwork or other parts of the structure which are covered, unexposed or inaccessible and I am therefore unable to report that any such part is free from defect. None of the services were tested. Damp meters were not used.
- 1.2 As the building was constructed in 2008, following the ban of all asbestos use in construction, it is unlikely to have any asbestos present. However old equipment brought into the church could contain asbestos and the PCC should make themselves familiar with the HSE guidance.
- 1.3 We must stress that we have not carried out any investigation to determine whether any high alumina cement (HAC) was used during the construction of the building inspected and we are therefore unable to report that the building is free from risk in this respect. As HAC was banned as a building material in 1976, the building shouldn't have had HAC specified, if however, the PCC deems there is a chance of high alumina cement we strongly recommend that the appropriate investigations, inspections, and tests be carried out immediately by a suitably qualified engineer.

### **Brief description**

- 1.4 A newly built church of 2008, replacing a former church on the same site. A simple design with a large hall centrally to the plan allowing it to host a multitude of events. The adjoining land was sold to fund the development and the church is single-storey, has car parking, modest grassed areas and is neatly arranged with the adjoining housing, which makes a good composition.
- 1.5 It is within the suburban area of Hartlepool.
- 1.6 The church was designed by Ashdown Architects and the working drawings of construction arranged by Three Rivers. Jeremy Kendall, RIBA, assisted the PCC in the design.

### **Summary of structural condition**

- 1.7 The structure of the building is fine and there is no structural movement. The internal walls display some shrinkage cracking to the plasterwork as would be expected in a new modern build. Otherwise, the inside of the building is in very good order.

### **Recent works**

- 1.8 The logbook was available at the inspection. It was clear and concise and contained all of the information required. Routine maintenance and inspections were included along with the following works:

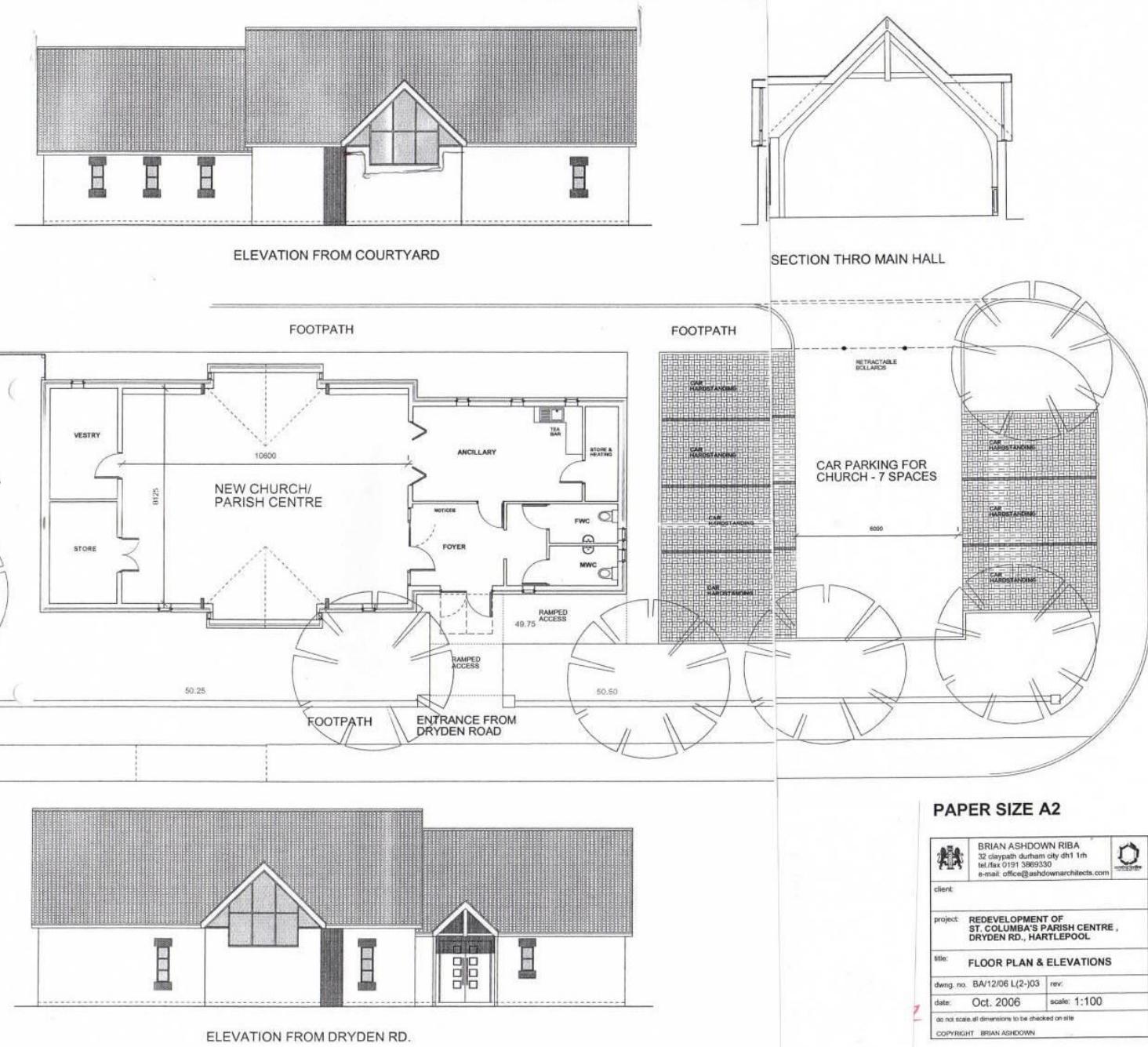
<b>Works completed since the last inspection:</b>		
Date:	Description:	By whom:
2016	Repair and fit toughened double glazed unit to main hall	The Glass Shop

	Several repairs to boiler incl; filling loop, replace ball valve & replace pressure switch	Fletcher & Opsand heating
	Repair fault on fire alarm	HE Woley
2017	Supply and install toughened window unit	The Glass shop
	Replace heating programmer	Fletcher & Opsand heating
	Repair fault on intruder alarm	Euro Security
2018	Adjust door on safe	Lock & Safe Co
2021	6 lights and 4 emergency lights replaced	A&G Electrical

### Previous Inspections

- 1.9 This is the author's first inspection of the church. The church has only had one previous inspection which was carried out by Mr David Beaumont, who provided a copy of his previous report to me.

Plan of the Church (Courtesy of Brian Ashdown, RIBA)



PAPER SIZE A2

	BRIAN ASHDOWN RIBA 32 claypath durham city dh1 1rh tel/fax 0191 3869330 e-mail: office@ashdownarchitects.com	
<b>client:</b>		
project:	REDEVELOPMENT OF ST. COLUMBA'S PARISH CENTRE , DRYDEN RD., HARTLEPOOL	
title:	FLOOR PLAN & ELEVATIONS	
dwg. no.	BA/12/06 L(2-)03	rev:
date:	Oct. 2006	scale: 1:100
do not scale all dimensions to be checked on site		
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## PART TWO

### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE EXTERIOR

#### 2 ROOF

- 2.1 **West Hall:** Dry fix ridge tiles and twin roll concrete tiles. Dry verge system to all sides. The roof also has a projecting bay with a valley gutter, vegetation growing to the base. The lead to all valleys has been replaced with a plastic alternative following persistent lead theft.
- 2.2 **West Amenity Block:** has the same roof covering as the hall. In good condition apart from one cracked tile at the southern end. Open porch also looks in good condition.
- 2.3 **East Side Amenity Block:** is sound apart from at the Nave abutment the plastic flashing is turned up at one point. This also has replacement abutment flashing with non-matching mortar which gives a poor finish.
- 2.4 **East Hall:** has the same detail and matches the opposite side. Valleys are very mossy and would benefit from cleaning out to prevent further growth as seen on the west side.



*Figure 1 – West Hall Valley*



*Figure 2 – East Abutment Flashing Lifting*

#### 3 RAINWATER SYSTEM, DRAINAGE

- 3.1 **West Elevation**
  - i. Hall: Northern end – the gutter and downpipe is dropping at both ends and there is vegetation build up to the south, as per item 2.1.
  - ii. Southern end – the gutter is full of moss and silt at the base of the valley.
  - iii. Amenity Block: The end of the gutter to the south isn't correctly attached at the bracket. Both gulleys here are broken or have covers missing, it is reported this is due to vandalism.



*Figure 3 – West side southern gutter clip*



*Figure 4 – West gully*

#### 4 WALLS - The church is built out of cavity brickwork, block inner with cement pointing.

- 4.1 **North Elevation** - Some staining on the wall from the timber sign, otherwise in good condition. The cross at high level is undecorated, and the timber is aging. The air bricks on this elevation

are all a satisfactory distance above external ground level.



*Figure 5 – Air Brick to South*

4.2 WEST ELEVATION - Good condition. However, the air bricks to the amenity block are partially below external ground level, it is believed that the ramp may have been added without considering the wider impact. There is writing next to the door which looks like graffiti, PCC reported this is by the clergy, however this could encourage other graffiti therefore could be done on a designated board if desired.

4.3 SOUTH ELEVATION - All in good condition, though one plastic floor vent air brick is broken slightly. The same issue as the west persists with all air vents almost fully below ground level. There are some marks of paint on the walls.

4.4 EAST ELEVATION - Incoming gas supply not sealed at penetration of the wall. The waste pipe clip is broken. The gas meter has brown parcel tape at edges keeping it shut. The remainder of the walling is okay.

## 5 WINDOWS & EXTERNAL WOODWORK OR METALWORK

- 5.1 Decoration to all fascias and soffits is deteriorating. The front entrance apex has been recently painted but would benefit from another coat and the underside of the soffit decorating.
- 5.2 Large bay windows on the east and west elevations are in good condition apart from some bead shrinkage/ movement. The remainder of windows are small, double light units and these all require decoration.
- 5.3 All windows have had a series of breakages and repairs over time, as seen in the logbook, unfortunately this is often to the larger, triangular panes but the PCC are resistant of adding protection and I agree this would change the aesthetic and approachability of the building.
- 5.4 The east elevation emergency exit doors seem to be okay, though the hinges are rusting and decoration beginning to deteriorate.
- 5.5 Metalwork - The steel supports to the porch have recently received decoration and are in good condition. The attached railings have also been recently decorated.
- 5.6 The sign next to the entrance door looks like it has been poorly silicone around and this has now partially worn away. The sign itself has faded slightly.



*Figure 6 – Entrance Sign*



*Figure 7 – Entrance Soffit*



*Figure 8 – Large Windows*

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERIOR



*Figure 9 – Lobby Ceiling*

### 6 LOBBY

- 6.1 Ceiling – plastered – slight damage to the side of the light fixing.
- 6.2 Walls – plastered, in good condition.
- 6.3 Floor – solid with entrance matting, no defects.
- 6.4 Entrance double door has dropped in the frame and requires easing. Room contains the fire alarm panel.

### 7 WC LOBBY

- 7.1 All finishes as the lobby apart from vinyl flooring and all in good condition.
- 7.2 This is all plastered and painted out and contains the green church bin and lawnmower.
- 7.3 This area contained an access hatch to the loft space, a trussed space with fibreglass insulation, all appeared ok at the time of inspection. Inspected from hatch only.

### 8 BABY CHANGE WC & DISABLED WC

- 8.1 Plastered walls and ceiling and solid floor with safety vinyl. This is all okay. To the Baby change WC the grab rail to the sink is loose and there is one missing adjacent to the WC. Decoration breaking down on the radiator.
- 8.2 Both rooms have some easings to plaster finishes at the SVP boxing, which is usual to see in new builds with differential shrinkage of materials. This should be caulked and decorated when other areas of decoration are required.
- 8.3 Due to the loss of accessibility rails to the right-hand WC, these should either be replaced or could be fully removed and solely designated as a WC & Baby Change, with the necessary changing facilities provided. Whereas the left hand WC could become the assigned accessible WC.



*Figure 10 – Easing to SVP*



*Figure 11 – Kitchen Storage*

### 9 KITCHEN

- 9.1 Plastered ceilings and walls in good condition. Solid floor with vinyl in wood effect. The room contains modest servery, sink and fridge, boxes below the counter for crockery. Additional storage may be useful here. The room also contains adjustable tables for separate worship.
- 9.2 To one side is a store cupboard which contains the boiler and cleaners sink. The boiler is a Vaillant Eco-Tech plus combination boiler and the room contains the timer and distribution board as well as the audio system. There is a range of mops and cleaning materials. Slight cracking showing in the corner against the hall, but this is only shrinkage. There is damaged decoration and plaster to the wall and ceiling, the PCC reported this was after a long period of the boiler being left on. This could have caused condensation build up as the room contains the sink,



*Figure 12 – Boiler Rm Damage*

therefore an extractor fan or removal of the sink may need to be considered. Inspecting above this area shows no other obvious cause.

- 9.3 There is an acoustic folding screen separating the two rooms. The door operates but the seal to the base is coming loose.

## 10 HALL

- 10.1 Exposed steel frame decorated with wind diagonals. Ceiling is plastered. Infill panels showing some shrinkage at the junctions of the steelwork and skirting boards, they only require decoration when it comes to redecorate. The walls are plastered and painted – in good condition.

- 10.2 The floor is solid with vinyl.

- 10.3 The radiators decoration is breaking down, this is unusual for radiators of this age and any warranties should be consulted, otherwise re-decorate.

- 10.4 Emergency exit doors both leaves operate okay, though the hinges are rusting now.



*Figure 13 – Hall shrinkage to walls*



*Figure 14 – Radiator Rust*

## 11 STORE

- 11.1 Plastered and painted ceiling and walls. Safety flooring on solid floor, all in good condition.

- 11.2 Pair of doors to the room had their bolting changed, though the previous bolt pockets need filling.

- 11.3 The room contains a lot of loose lumber; it would be wise to have this shelved out. The room also contains the safe, a clear path is maintained to the safe.

## 12 VESTRY

- 1.1 Plastered ceiling, painted walls with solid floor as elsewhere. Rooms contains clergy vestments, bookshelf and filing cabinet. The door is binding slightly at the catch.
- 1.2 Above the vestry and store is an attic space which is used for storage. The PCC should risk assess what is stored in this area as it is open to the main hall and could pose a greater fire risk.

## 13 INTERNAL DOORS

- 1.3 Internal doors are all flush doors with beech finish.

## 15 FIXTURES AND FITTINGS

- 1.1 Furniture: Bishop's chair, credence table, lectern, various loose chairs all in good condition.

## 16 BELLS: none

## 17 ELECTRICAL

- 17.1 Electricity: underground service to consumer unit in kitchen. A test report could not be produced at the time of inspection, this was one of the recommendations of the last QI to carry out a test, therefore this should be done if not already commissioned.



*Figure 15 – Hall with Loose Furniture*

17.2 Lighting: The system hasn't been tested since it was built and is due now. The light fittings are recessed downlights with twin lamps, apart from the hall which has four suspended twin fluorescent lamps.

17.3 PAT: – last tested in June 2022 and is tested annually.



*Figure 16 – Boiler and CU*

**18 HEATING** by gas fired Vaillant Eco-Tech Plus combination boiler providing heating and hot water via plastic distribution pipes hidden within the walls. Two traditional steel panel radiators. Serviced in July 2023. Repairs were required to the top up mechanism and the boiler is reported to be at its capacity limit.

18.1 Gas meter: situated on the east elevation behind the kitchen wall and enters into the kitchen store.

**19 LIGHTNING CONDUCTOR** – None

## 20 FIRE PRECAUTIONS

20.1 The PCC have carried out a fire risk assessment and details are held within their health and safety file. Fire alarm panel in the Foyer, tested June 2023.

20.2 Fire extinguishers, test date August 2023 as follows:

- i. Kitchen – fire blanket, 2Kg CO2
- ii. Church Hall – 9ltr water
- iii. Foyer – 9ltr water

## 21 WATER AND SANITARY FACILITIES

21.1 Water: service reported to enter from the east. Stop tap assumed to be in the road and within the kitchen. Sink in the kitchen, cleaner sink in the cleaner cupboard, toilets and wash hand basins.

21.2 Foul drainage is connected to the system within the highway. Surface water drainage is also reportedly connected into the highway system.

## 22 ACCESSIBILITY

22.1 An access audit has been carried out and a written record is retained in the parish records.

22.2 There is a ramped approach from the car parking which has a disabled car park space (entrance to the church from Dryden Road is via steps). The foyer entrance threshold is level and there is level access throughout the building. All satisfactory.

## 23 SECURITY

23.1 The vestry contains the intruder alarm panel; however, this does not work and repair or replacement should be considered given the level of vandalism.

## 24 GROUNDS, BOUNDARIES, PATHS, TREES

24.1 The church is within a grassed urban site and there is no churchyard. At the entrance from the road, there is a step which would benefit from some tonal/ colour differentiation to the nosing.

24.2 The church is a new development amongst new housing and sits on a corner of the site. It has land all round it, though



*Figure 17 – Boundary Wall Pier*

mostly to the north, south and west. The church has paving around the east, west and south elevations to the doorway. The remaining areas are in grass.

- 24.3 There is a low brick wall to the north and west elevations that is in ok condition, with a number of bricks missing from the piers, there are also open joints at the bottom of the wall on the west elevation.
- 24.4 Some slight cracking to the wall at the Dryden Road sign. On the north side, there is also cracking and some slight horizontal movement on the corners, near the utility box. There is a timber fence to the northeast elevation which requires decoration and a gate in timber that is swollen into the frame, though this appears to be unused.



*Figure 18 – Horizontal Movement*

## 25 GENERAL COMMENTS

25.1 A new church which is seeing the usual matters associated with new builds such as slight easings to the plaster finishes. The boiler room requires some level of intervention to ensure the issue to the ceiling and walls is resolved. All rainwater goods require checking to ensure they provide appropriate falls to the outlets and all joints are secure. The paving over the air vents needs attending to in a way that will not encourage water to enter. All windows require decoration before their condition deteriorates.



*Figure 19- Gutters/ Valleys*



*Figure 20 – Air Vents Below GL*



*Figure 21 – Windows Require Decoration*

## PART THREE

### Summary of repairs in order of priority

Category	Description	Item ref	Budget Costs	
<b>Category 1</b> - Urgent, requiring immediate attention.				
1	Fix all gutters and brackets to ensure flow to outlets and clear all vegetation	3.1, 3.2	£0- £1,999	
1	Carry out 5-yearly electrical test and keep certificate in logbook	17.1		
1	Either replace or remove accessible rails from WC	8.3		
<b>Category 2</b> - Requires attention within 12 months.				
2	Re-decorate all windows and replace any beads that are too short. Redecorate fascias & soffits	5.1, 5.2	£0- £1,999	
2	Install extractor fan to boiler cupboard or remove sink if not used	9.2		
2	Ensure ground level at air bricks is 75mm below the base of the air vent.	4.2- 4.4		
2	Decorate underside of soffit	5.1		
2	Replace gulley covers	3.2		
2	Ease front door	6.4		
<b>Category 3</b> - Requires attention within the next 12-24 months.				
3	Caulk and paint any easings to plaster and around light fitting in lobby	6.1, 8.2	£0- £1,999	
3	Remove rust and decorate radiators	10.3		
3	Seal around gas pipe entry and fix meter box enclosure	4.4		
<b>Category 4</b> - Requires attention within the quinquennial period.				
4	Decide on whether security system is needed – if so, make repairs to system in place	23.1		
4	Repair cracked tile when carrying out other roof works	2.2		
<b>Category 5</b> - A desirable improvement with no timescale.				
5	Consider storage to the kitchen	9.1	£0- £1,999	
5	Shelve out storeroom	11.3		
5	Install board for writing next to door instead of writing on brickwork	4.2		
5	Monitor boundary wall	24.4		
<b>Advice &amp; routine maintenance.</b> This can mostly be done without professional advice or a faculty.				
Clean all gutters and valleys				
Keep Logbook updated with all works				
Oil hinges to lesser used doors				

### AREAS NOT INSPECTED (The following list may not be exhaustive)

- Any under floor voids (where present)
- High level items only inspected from ground level
- Covered concrete
- No services or utilities tested

## ADDENDUM to the SURVEY REPORT - Required under the Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1991

### Advice to the PCC

This is a summary report; it is not a specification for the execution of the work and must not be used as such. The professional adviser is willing to advise the PCC on implementing the recommendations and will if so requested prepare a specification, seek tenders and oversee the repairs. The PCC is advised to seek ongoing advice from the professional adviser on problems with the building. The repairs recommended in the report will (with the exception of some minor maintenance items) be subject to the faculty jurisdiction. Guidance on whether particular work is subject to faculty can be obtained from the DAC. The PCC minutes must record that an application is being made for permission or faculty and a copy of that minute must accompany the application together with a full specification, drawing where appropriate and an estimate of the cost of the work. In any application for grant aid a full specification is always required.

- **Logbook**  
The parish has a duty under Canon F13(4) to keep a Log Book recording all work carried out on the building. I commend this practice to the PCC. Not only does it help the inspecting architect but it can prove a valuable aid to the parish.
- **Fire Safety Advice** can be found at <https://www.firesafe.org.uk/places-of-religious-worship/>  
<https://www.ecclesiastical.com/risk-management/church-fire-articles/>

- **Electrical Installation**

Any electrical installation should be tested at least every five years in accordance with the recommendations of the Church Buildings Council. The inspection and testing should be carried out in accordance with IEE Regulations, Guidance Note No. 3 and an inspection certificate obtained in every case. The certificate should be kept with the Church Logbook.

- **Heating Installation**

A proper examination and test should be made of the heating system by a qualified engineer each summer before the heating season begins, and the report kept with the Church Logbook

- **Lightning Protection**

Any lightning conductor should be tested at least every five years in accordance with the current British Standard by a competent engineer. The record of the test results and conditions should be kept with the Church Logbook.

- **Asbestos**

A suitable and sufficient assessment should be made as to whether asbestos is or is liable to be present in the premises. Further details on making an assessment are available on <http://www.churchcare.co.uk/churches/guidance-advice/looking-after-your-church/health-safety-security/asbestos>

- **Equality Act**

The PCC should ensure that they have understood their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. Further details and guidance are available at <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/churchofengland/advice-and-guidance-church-buildings/accessibility>

- **Health and Safety**

Overall responsibility for the health and safety of the church and churchyard lies with the incumbent and PCC. This report may identify areas of risk as part of the inspection but this does not equate to a thorough and complete risk assessment by the PCC of the building and churchyard.

- **Bats and other protected species**

The PCC should be aware of its responsibilities where protected species are present in a church. Guidance can be found at: <https://batsinchurches.org.uk/>

- **Sustainable buildings**

A quinquennial inspection is a good opportunity for a PCC to reflect on the sustainability of the building and its use. This may include adapting the building to allow greater community use, considering how to increase resilience in the face of predicted changes to the climate, as well as increasing energy efficiency and considering other environmental issues. Further guidance is available on <http://www.churchcare.co.uk/shrinking-the-footprint>

- **Maintenance**

Continual vigilance to guard against blockages in gutters and the rainwater system as a whole is needed. Every parish must find for itself a reliable procedure to ensure that gutters, ground gutters, gullies and drains are kept clean. Gutters and pipes should be checked at least twice a year. If the Log Book is used as a check list of action every year and kept as an up to date record this will itself act as a reminder.

- **Church wardens' inspection**

Although the Measure requires the church to be inspected every five years serious trouble may develop in between these surveys if minor defects are left unattended. It is recommended that the wardens should make or have made a careful inspection of the fabric at least once a year and arrange immediate attention to such matters as displaced slates and leaking pipes.

- **Insurance**

The PCC is advised that insurance cover should be reviewed annually to take account of any rise in the cost of rebuilding. The PCC should also take note of any specific conditions or risk improvements required by the insurer alongside all of their standard conditions of cover

NOTES:

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