



Historic England



Department for
Digital, Culture,
Media & Sport

Maintenance Checklist for Places of Worship

Name of place of worship:

An Introduction to the Maintenance Checklist

Thank you for looking after your historic place of worship. Monitoring the fabric of your building and performing regular maintenance are key to preserving these places for future generations. As the person on site, you are likely to be the first to notice changes that could indicate defects. Working with a professional advisor will allow decisions to be made on if action is needed, and when. This will help tackle defects to prevent further deterioration. Regular checks also monitor how well previous interventions have worked.

Using this checklist will help organise the time, people and the costs of maintenance tasks. It will also record observations and work that is carried out.

Using the checklist

This document provides a checklist to assist maintenance planning for places of worship in England. Please edit this template to suit the needs of your place of worship and to meet the requirements of your insurer. For example, make a note of the months your gutters will need checking after leaf fall, and which year the rainwater goods should be repainted.

The checklist is most useful if you update it on a regular basis. Feature it as a regular item on meeting agendas (e.g. PCC, Fabric Committee, Trustees or Elders meetings) to ensure tasks are regularly carried out. Date any entries that you make and when works have been completed. We recommend that you include plans of interior, exterior, grounds and elevations (or photographs) at the end of the document as they can be useful for contractors and volunteers. These can be used to mark areas of concern for monitoring.

Risk assessment

A risk assessment should be in place for all maintenance tasks, especially if carrying them out alone. We recommend that maintenance is always carried out by two people together where possible. Volunteers should not take any risks that threaten their safety.

We recommend that any person working in isolation stays at ground level (unless there is safe access to go higher), has a mobile phone with them and tells someone else about their plans to be at the church and a time for when they plan to be finished.

Costs

It is important to include the cost of maintenance tasks in the plan so they can be incorporated into the annual budget for your place of worship. It may take time to receive quotes for maintenance. We recommend the checklist is updated with the cost of works as soon as they are received.

Useful equipment when carrying out maintenance inspections

- gloves (disposable and heavy duty)
- a torch
- binoculars
- a mask (for dust or guano when going into enclosed spaces)
- safety glasses or goggles
- a first-aid kit
- a camera (or mobile phone camera)
- measuring stick and or tape measure
- clipboard (for recording your observations)
- A plan or general photograph of the building for highlighting the location of issues or where photographs are taken from.

Links between volunteers, professional contractors and advisors

Places of worship often have a professional advisor, such as a qualified architect or surveyor, who undertakes a regular building inspection. This is usually done every five years and is known as a quinquennial inspection, or QI. It should be noted that a building inspection report is not a maintenance plan, but it should inform your maintenance routine.

Each place of worship is different and will have its own maintenance requirements and arrangements. Many have volunteers who can do most of the regular tasks, depending on the complexity of the building. Others employ a contractor for some or all tasks, such as work requiring access at height. A professional advisor plays an important role and can help with advice on building related issues, including hiring a contractor, or tasks which might need professional guidance.

To make best use of this checklist, we recommend that you consult a professional advisor (often your Quinquennial Inspector) on certain tasks. These are highlighted with an asterisk * on the checklist.

Please note: this checklist has evolved following discussions on maintenance with congregations taking part in the Taylor Review Pilot, Historic England's National Specialist Services and in conversation with the National Churches Trust and The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings. It may not cover all aspects of a Maintenance Plan or associated legal duties for every place of worship (including relevant consents). We hope that it will help you to look after your building and keep it watertight and safe.

1.5.5	Fire-fighting equipment	Service fire extinguishers	Specialist contractor	Annually								
1.5.6	Hearing amplification system (if applicable)	Check operation and security of all fittings and wiring. Report faults	Volunteer	Annually								
1.5.7	Lightning protection (if applicable)	Check condition of lightning conductor. Report faults Periodic inspection and testing	Volunteer If there is a strike you must use a specialist lightning protection contractor or electrical contractor Specialist contractor	After a suspected strike Recommend every 11 months								The frequency of periodic inspection by specialist depends on the system in place, insurance requirements, etc. so check and consult professional advisor to confirm
1.5.8	Fire alarm system (if applicable)	Weekly test	Volunteer	Weekly								
		User attention – only for systems with open-cell batteries or the use of a standby generator	Specialist contractor	Monthly								
		Professional inspection – only for systems with vented batteries	Specialist contractor	Quarterly								
		Professional periodic inspection and test	Specialist contractor	Every 6 months								
		Professional inspection and test	Specialist contractor	Annually								

1.5.9	Emergency lighting (if applicable)	Daily check	Volunteer	Daily									
		Functional check	Trained volunteer	Monthly									
		Duration test	Specialist contractor	Annually									
1.5.10	Intruder alarm system / roof alarm (if applicable)	Service	Specialist contractor	Annually									
1.5.11	Lift (if applicable)	Service	Specialist contractor	Annually									
1.5.12	Legionella (if applicable)	Prevention of Legionella – Review and update risk assessment, implement any necessary preventative measures	Specialist	Determined by risk assessment									

1.6	Total annual cost for occasional and regular tasks (excluding inflation & VAT)	£
1.7	Total cost per year of cyclical tasks (on an interval of more than 1 year eg painting or building services maintenance) (excluding inflation & VAT)	£

2 Summary of works to be undertaken (to be extracted from QI summary or equivalent)

Source (QI/other survey) and date:

	Timeframe	Date required	Description	Estimated Cost	Date Completed	Actual Cost
2.1	Year 1 (within 1 year)					
2.2	Year 2 (within 2 years)					
2.3	Years (within 3 – 5 years)					

2.4	Total cost of works for the next 5 years (estimated)	£	
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This checklist is endorsed for use by:

