

# Quinquennial Inspections in the Diocese of London

## Preface

This document is designed to provide a summary of the requirements for quinquennial inspection reports (QIRs) in the Diocese of London and to be sent to quinquennial inspectors (QIs) for reference with each instruction to carry out a new inspection and report. Full details of the scope and administration of QIRs in the Diocese of London can be found in the Scheme for the Inspection of Churches 2025.

This document is updated following the “Advice and guidance for church buildings – Quinquennial inspections” from the Church Building Council’s website, link [here](#).

## Introduction

Under the provisions of the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction and Care of Churches Measure 2018, as amended by the Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure 2020, referred to hereafter as “the Measure”, all parish churches in the Diocese, all other consecrated churches and chapels including licenced places of worship opted in under paras 38 to 44 of the Measure (previously the Care of Places of Worship Measure 1999), and buildings licensed for public worship, must be inspected at least once in any five-year period.

In the Diocese of London:

1. All parish churches in the Diocese, as well as all other consecrated churches and chapels and buildings licensed for public worship, which are required to be inspected under The Measure, shall be inspected at least once in any five-year period (“the Quinquennial Inspection”) under this Scheme. For the avoidance of doubt, where a Quinquennial Inspection has taken place under a previous Diocesan Scheme the five-year period shall commence from the date of that previous report. The PCC’s choice of inspecting architect or surveyor must be agreed by the Diocesan Advisory Committee (“DAC”).
2. Nothing in this Scheme affects the legal responsibility of every PCC for the proper care of each church under its authority, and its duty to apply for a Faculty or for permission under Schedule 1 of the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2015 (as amended by the Faculty Jurisdiction (Amendment) Rules 2019) before any work is commissioned.
3. Inspections are commissioned by the office of the relevant archdeacon.
4. Quinquennial inspections should be visual, and such as can be made from ground level ladders or accessible roofs, galleries, scaffolding or with the use of drones (both internal and external). Parts of the structure which are inaccessible, enclosed or covered will not be opened up unless this is specifically requested. The inspection is to include, so far as is practicable, all features of the building, and to cover all aspects of conservation and repair. The PCC shall provide ladders and any other assistance, as the inspector considers necessary.

5. From the notes taken during the inspection, the inspecting architect or surveyor should prepare a report following the outline given in Appendix 1 below.
6. Within **one (1) month** of completing the inspection, the inspecting architect or surveyor should produce and distribute a copy of the report in pdf form to the Incumbent, the PCC, the relevant Archdeacon and the Parish Property and Fundraising team and also paper copy to the Incumbent and the PCC.
7. The inspecting architect or surveyor should meet the Churchwardens and PCC after producing the report to discuss its contents and advise on work arising from it.
8. After completion and submission of the report the invoice for its production should be submitted to the office of the relevant archdeacon for payment. Details of the current fee band structure can be found in the Scheme, and information on the specific band occupied by a given church or site can be obtained from the Parish Property and Fundraising team. Any other services provided by the architect or surveyor are the responsibility of the PCC and should be invoiced to it.
9. The Care of Churches Team maintains a database of those buildings and sites which are covered by these requirements and of architects and surveyors who have been interviewed and accepted by the DAC as suitable inspectors.
10. Any questions which may arise concerning the interpretation of this document or of the Scheme should be directed in the first instance to the Care of Churches Team. If necessary, the matter will be referred to the Bishop's Council, the decision of which shall be binding.

## The scope and contents of the report

### Checklist of items required by the Quinquennial Inspector to complete the report

The following table should be included in the QI report as an appendix.

Item	Seen (date of report)	Unavailable	Not Applicable
The church logbook			
Copy of the previous quinquennial inspection report			
Schedule of all works / installations / repairs (including insurance claims) undertaken since the last Quinquennial Inspection			
Copy of Electrical Installation Test Report (to be enclosed with the quinquennial report if available)			
Copy of Quinquennial Tree Report, noting TPOs (to be enclosed with the quinquennial report if available)			

<b>Copies of Test Reports</b>			
Lightning Conductor Test Report			
Portable Appliance Test Report			
Asbestos Inspection Report			
Access and Disability Audit Report			
Fire Risk Assessment			
Health & Safety Risk Assessment			
Gas Safety / Boiler Service Report			
Fire Appliances (extinguishers) Test Report			
Fire Alarm & Emergency Lighting Test Report			
Security Alarm Test Report			
The church's buildings insurance Policy			
Any recommendations from insurers regarding security			
Inventory of fixtures, fittings and Furniture			
Any licences permitting use by others of part of the premises for any fixed installation, together with certificates of electrical and / or any other test in respect of this			
Any other reports available, e.g. by the local fire prevention officer or police crime prevention officer.			
Any agreement with the local authority for handover of the upkeep of the churchyard.			

1. The Quinquennial Inspection shall be completed in accordance with the current guidance of the CBC. There is an interactive report template within the Church Heritage Record entry for each church. The DAC recommends that this template is used with the recommended headings and structure as listed below in this guideline, although reports submitted in a similar digital format which is compliant with the Scheme and the accompanying CBC guidance will be accepted.
2. The structure and content of the Quinquennial Inspection Report shall follow the recommendations set out in the CBC guidance.
3. The report shall summarise the works needed in the following categories:
  - 1 - Urgent, requiring immediate attention
  - 2 - Requires attention within 12 months
  - 3 - Requires attention within the next 12 – 24 months
  - 4 - Requires attention within the quinquennial period

5 - A desirable improvement with no timescale (as agreed with the PCC)

6 - Require regular monitoring

Any routine items of maintenance (including repairs) within these timescales may fall under Schedule 1 of the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules, ie under List A or B, and the Inspector must indicate if he/she considers this to be the case. All other matters will require faculty permission. This summary should be put in a table format as an appendix for clear reference for the PCC.

4. Broad indicative costs within the bands set out in the CBC guidance and template for all such works are recommended to be given whenever a recent cost reference is available, to enable the PCC to understand the level of funding which is likely to be necessary. When considering executing such works, PCCs should get accurate costings from a Quantity Surveyor.

## Proposed headings and structure of report

Cover Page	<b>Church name and address</b>
	<b>Name and address of QI</b>
	<b>Executive summary</b> provide an overall grade of the condition of the church and highlight area in need of urgent attention
<b>Background</b> <small>note 1</small>	Name of Church, Diocese and Archdeaconry
	Date of inspection and report, date of previous inspections, record of weather conditions.
	Key plan, drawn to scale where possible
	Brief description of the building, including orientation and seating capacity of the worship area. The report should not rehearse the history of the building or site, and should only be added if it has a direct relationship to the present condition.
	List the trees in the churchyard, noting any subject to tree preservation orders, note whether the church is within a conservation area, the church's historical background, brief architectural history, materials used in construction, site access, provision for disabled people, parking facilities.
	Church normal opening times (Whether the church is open to the public during the week, and details of regular activities (not including regular faith activities) that take place in the building and any other organisations which use the building.)
<b>Limitation</b> <small>note 2</small>	State the limitations of the report
	Whether it is made from the ground or from other accessible floor levels, ladders, readily accessible locations or drones.
	That the inspections are visual. Opening up of enclosed spaces is excluded, even if further inspection of these spaces may be recommended.
	If appropriate, list items not inspected.
	Note that the report is restricted to the general condition of the building and its defects.
<b>Schedule of works completed since previous Quinquennial Inspection Report</b>	List repairs carried out since the last inspection: - Works recommended in the last report. - Items of emergency repair. - Alterations, additions and demolitions.
<b>General Condition</b>	Describe the general condition of the building noting: - Any particular movement. - Subsidence and settlement. - Areas of damp penetration. - General areas of damage and decay. - Any particular work undertaken outside the churchyard which might have an impact on the church and its setting.
<b>Logbook</b>	Comment on the requirement for reports from the Fire Prevention Officer, security consultant, insurers etc.
<b>External</b> <small>note 3</small>	

<b>Roof</b>	Systematically record materials, construction, general condition, including ridges, hips, valleys, parapet wall gutters, cess boxes, chutes, flashings, and any special features.
	Whenever possible, use drone and/or telescope to inspect whole roof covering.
<b>Rainwater goods and disposal system</b>	Record materials, condition and cleanliness. Assess whether adequate. <sup>note 4</sup>
<b>Below ground water drainage</b>	Comment on storm drains, soakaways, foul drains, inspection chambers and rodding eyes and their condition.
<b>Parapets and upstand walls</b>	Construction and condition of parapets, copings, cappings, finials, crosses.
<b>External wall</b>	Record materials and general condition of all walling of towers and spires, walls, crossing walls, referring to buttresses, to stonework details such as cills, mullions, stringcourses, arches, lintels, carved and moulded features.
	Plinths, gratings, air bricks.
	Note the condition of pointing.
<b>Timber porches, doors and canopies</b>	Comment on the materials and general condition of all timber structures, including doors and their frames, timber and metal window frames, commenting on external finishes.
<b>Windows</b>	Comment on the condition of external window openings, stonework, saddle bars, and glazing, including the leading, condensation trays and ferramenta.
<b>INTERNAL</b>	
<b>Towers, spires</b> <sup>note 5</sup>	Comment on the condition of the tower internal walling and spire from nearest accessible point
	Note general condition of bells and bell frames, headstocks and rope guards. Complete Section One, the "Tower & Belfry, Survey & Condition Report" in Appendix B below. Recommend the PCC to employ a specialist to complete Section Two if necessary.
	Timber floors, supporting structures, noting any beam ends which need further investigation.
	Louvres and bird mesh.
	Access provision, ladders, trapdoors etc.
<b>Clocks and their enclosures</b>	Note the general condition of external enclosures, any evidence of routine maintenance, and general information on the condition. Complete Section One, the "Turret Clock Survey & Condition Report" in Appendix B below. Recommend the PCC to employ a specialist to complete Section Two if necessary.
<b>Roof and ceiling voids</b>	Where accessible, note general condition.
	Include signs of water penetration, structural failure and insect attack.
	Where suspended ceilings exist, comment on materials and general condition.

	Where possibility of asbestos exists, note its condition and the implications of its removal.
<b>Roof structures, ceilings</b>	Comment on materials and general condition of all exposed elements. Include braces, fixing methods, decorative panels.
<b>Upper floors, balconies, access stairs</b>	Comment on the construction and condition of upper floors within the main building. Note requirements for ventilation.
	Report on general condition of balconies, stairways and balustrades, noting any particular areas needing improvement under health and safety legislation.
<b>Partitions, screens, panelling, doors and door furniture</b>	Comment on materials and general condition of all screens, panelling, partitions, doors, frames and ironmongery.
	Comment on any carved items, painted panels and other items of particular merit.
<b>Ground floor structure, timber platforms</b>	Comment on materials and general condition, ventilation and adequacy.
	Report on general conditions of timber platforms, pew platforms.
<b>Internal finishes</b>	Comment on materials and condition of wall and ceiling finishes.
	Note dampness, areas of decayed plaster and any other apparent defects.
<b>Fittings, fixtures, furniture and movable articles</b>	Comment on condition of important fittings, fixtures and movable articles.
	Note particularly any designated by the archdeacon for inspection.
	Note defects and make recommendations for security, in a separate letter from the main report.
	Note whether conservation or other specialist advice is required.
<b>Toilets, kitchens, vestries etc</b>	General condition, fitness for purpose, cleanliness.
<b>Organs and other musical instruments</b>	Comment on general condition and access provision. Record if the organ is used regularly (if any). Complete Section One, the "Organ Chamber Survey and Condition Report" in Appendix B below. Recommend PCC to employ a specialist to complete Section Two if necessary.
<b>Monuments, tombs, plaques etc</b>	Comment briefly on the condition and make recommendations for PCC to get specialist advice where necessary.
<b>Service installations generally</b>	Note that the report and comments are based on a visual examination only and that no tests of services have been undertaken. Make recommendations for testing, as appropriate.
<b>Heating installation</b>	State type of system installed, fuel, age, apparent condition and existence of maintenance agreements (PCC to advise).
<b>Electrical installation</b>	Note location and apparent condition of incoming mains, meters and distribution boards. Note last

	inspection by NICEIC contractor (PCC to advise).
<b>Lighting System</b>	Condition, state of maintenance and efficiency, safety of means of access.
<b>Sound system</b>	Comment on the provision and condition of sound systems and loop systems, and whether they are regularly maintained under a maintenance agreement (PCC to advise).
<b>Lightning conductor</b>	Comment on condition, when last inspected, make recommendations for testing and improvement in accordance with current legislation.
<b>Fire precautions</b>	Note number, position and types of fire extinguishers provided. Examine records of maintenance for appliances.
<b>Disabled provision and access</b>	Comment on provision for the disabled, including access to various parts of the church, and make recommendations for areas where improvements should be considered with reference to current legislations.
<b>Safety</b>	Comment in general on the safety of the church for its users and visitors, including reference to the Asbestos Assessment and the Fire Risk Assessment by the PCC.
<b>Bats</b>	Comment on any known locations of bats, reports known from any bat groups, likely bat roosts, and implications for future repairs.
	Advise parish to obtain report from Bat Conservation Trust and, if necessary, a local bat group, if any works or building management practices are likely to have a detrimental effect on bats. If in doubt, refer parish to Bat Conservation Trust.
<b>CURTILAGE</b>	
<b>Churchyard</b>	Comment on general condition of any grassed and planted areas.
<b>Ruins</b>	Inspect and comment on any ruin in the churchyard, noting any known to be designated as being of outstanding architectural, artistic, historical or archaeological value (PCC to advise).
<b>Monuments, tombs and vaults</b>	Comment on general condition, making specific reference to any obvious defects, health and safety risks and any necessity for a programme of action to address longer term problems.
<b>Boundary walls, lychgates and fencing</b>	Briefly describe in general terms materials and condition of all elements.
<b>Trees and shrubs</b>	Note any trees or shrubs likely to injure persons or damage the fabric of the building, recommend the PCC to appoint specialist to inspect the tree and create a tree management plan if necessary as per HSE endorsed, NTSG document, common sense risk management of tree. Particular attention should be given to any trees subject to Tree Preservation Orders (PCC to advise). The latest quinquennial tree report to be annexed to the Quinquennial Inspection Report.
<b>Hardstanding areas</b>	Comment on general condition of paths, paving,

	hardstanding, steps, car parking areas and surface water drainage.
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	Comment on garden sheds and other site features not mentioned above, rubbish disposal etc.
<b>Appendix</b>	<p><b>A.</b> Checklist of documents inspected</p> <p><b>B.</b> ORGAN, BELLS AND CLOCKS SURVEY &amp; CONDITION REPORTS</p> <p><b>C.</b> Recommended work schedule <sup>note 6</sup></p> <p><b>D.</b> Photo schedule</p>

## Note

1. Please note that it is not necessary to copy all historical description of the church. A brief overview of the history and background will be sufficient.
2. If it is necessary to quote legislation, a summary and reference to the original text will be sufficient.
3. Please include example photos of the specific area pointed out in the report in the text for easy reference.
4. Given the effect of climate change, the QI should assess if the current arrangement is sufficient for the more severe weather
5. If no secure access available, use of drone or telescope for inspection is recommended to allow close up inspection of the condition.
6. List items under the following degrees of priority, noting items which might safely be entrusted to unskilled labour:
  1. Urgent works requiring immediate attention
  2. Works recommended to be carried out during the next twelve months
  3. Works recommended to be carried out within 24 months
  4. Works recommended to be carried out during the quinquennial period
  5. Works needing consideration beyond the quinquennial period

Where possible, budget costs should be indicated. It should however be made clear that these will be subject to tenders. The report is not a specification for works and it does not give permission for them to be carried out.

## Standard explanatory notes to be added to all inspection reports

- A** Any electrical installation should be tested at least every quinquennium by a registered NICEIC electrician, and a resistance and earth continuity test should be obtained on all circuits. The engineer's test report should be kept with the church logbook. The present report is based upon a visual inspection of the main switchboard and of certain sections of the wiring selected at random, without the use of instruments

- B** Any lightning conductor should be tested in accordance with the current British Standard by a competent engineer, and the record of the test results and conditions should be kept with the church logbook. The PCC should check with the church insurer and the qualified engineer for the required testing interval.
- C** A proper examination and test should be made of the heating apparatus by a qualified engineer each summer before the heating season begins
- D** A minimum of two water type fire extinguishers (sited adjacent to each exit) should be provided plus additional special extinguishers for the organ and boiler house, as detailed below.

Large churches will require more extinguishers. As a general rule of thumb, one water extinguisher should be provided for every 250 square metres of floor area.

### Summary

Location	Type of Extinguisher
General	Water
Organ	Carbon Dioxide
Boiler Room	
Solid fuel boiler	Water
Gas fired boiler	Dry powder
Oil fired boiler	Foam, or dry power if electricity supply to boiler room cannot be easily isolated

All extinguishers should be inspected annually by a competent engineer to ensure they are in good working order. Further advice can be obtained from the Fire Prevention Officer of the local Fire Brigade and from your insurers.

- E** This is a summary report only, as required by the Inspection of Churches Measure 1955 as amended by the Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Exemption Measure 1991 (“the Measure”).  
The quinquennial inspector is willing to advise the PCC on implementing the recommendations, and will if so, request to prepare a specification, seek tenders and direct the repairs.
- F** Although the Measure requires the church to be inspected every five years, it should be realised that serious trouble may develop in between these surveys if minor defects are left unattended. Churchwardens are required by the Measure to make an annual inspection of the fabric and furnishings of the church, and to prepare a report for consideration by the meeting of the PCC before the Annual Parochial Church Meeting. This then must be presented with any amendments made by the PCC, to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting. The PCC are strongly advised to join the Diocese of London Gutter Maintenance Scheme if they have not already done so.

- G** Woodwork or other parts of the building that are covered, unexposed or inaccessible have not been inspected. Your quinquennial inspector cannot therefore report that any such part of the building is free from defect.
- H** The repairs recommended in the report will, with the exception of some maintenance items as explained in the “Minor Works” list on the Buildings page of the Diocese’s website, require a Faculty before they may be carried out. If you have any questions, please consult the Parish Property and Fundraising team.
- I** The PCC are reminded that insurance cover should be index-linked so that adequate cover is maintained against inflation of building costs. Contact should be made with the insurance provider to ensure that cover remains adequate.