



Property Matters

Please pass to your property representative

The Newsletter from Grants Loans and Property Committee Thames North
Synod of the United Reformed Church
Tel: 020 7799 5000 – Ipalo House 32-34 Great Peter Street London SW1 2DB
– Fax: 020 7799 5555

Quinquennial Inspection

Quinquennial Inspections are now due for many of the churches within our Synod and reminder letters will soon be sent out.

Some inspections that should have been carried out during 2009 still appear to be outstanding and further chase-up letters will be sent out soon.

Others will become due during this current year and letters, together with procedure documents will be delivered to Church Secretaries in the next few weeks.

Of the 150 churches within our Synod 64 are either overdue or due this year to have an inspection carried out.

For listed places of worship quinquennial inspection is a statutory requirement. For all other places of worship the Synod recommend that an inspection is completed using the same process.

The Synod will provide a grant of up

to £500 plus VAT for church buildings.

The same rules apply for manse properties and a grant of £300 plus VAT will be given for those properties housing a minister in pastoral charge. If your manse is being let, a quinquennial inspection is still required but should be paid for from income received.

If you have any questions relating to quinquennial inspection please contact David Skipp - see page 2.



Insurance cover

Were you aware that around half of listed buildings do not have adequate insurance cover?



According to the Ecclesiastical Insurance Group this is usually due to the fact that insurance on listed buildings is not sufficient to cover the higher cost of repairs to such properties.

Whether your church building is listed or not, it may well be worth checking that your cover is adequate. The first place to start is with your insurance company as they may offer a valuation service, although you should enquire if there is a charge for this.

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Have you completed your Fire Safety Risk Assessment and Fire Safety Plan? If not, and you require more information, a book published by BRE Press can help with this and matters of security.

The book, 'Fire safety and security in places of worship', provides practical information on assessing the risk of fire and enhancing security of places of worship.

Contact the
BRE bookshop on
01344 328038
ISBN
978-1-84806-063-0
Price £25

Towards a renewal strategy

The GLPC paper titled 'Towards a Renewal Strategy' was presented at Synod in November 2009 with the recommendation for a pilot study to be carried out that will look at an area or group of churches.

The process to be adopted will follow in much the same way as most of our larger development projects with the appointment of a Project Development Team and the study will consider:

- The mission of each local church within the group or area
- The potential for growth within each group or area
- The need for each church building to be retained
- Financial implications

Trinity High Wycombe

Trinity High Wycombe have been working towards a programme for re-ordering their main worship space for around 8 years or so. They finally completed phase 2 of their project just before the Christmas holidays and a service of thanksgiving and dedication was led by their minister, Revd Dr Gwen Collins, on 29th November 2009.

The buildings are listed which meant they had more than the usual planning hoops to jump through, but the final result has provided a multipurpose space that will greatly enhance their worship work and mission.

See: <http://trinity-urc.org.uk/>



The challenge we now face is where to carry out the pilot study and to this end GLPC are seeking views from local churches and Area Committees.

Beyond the pilot study the challenge will be much greater as each Area Committee and other Synod Committees will need to consider the wider implications of renewal strategy.

If your church or Area is interested in taking part in a pilot study please contact David Skipp for more information.



"By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds."

1 Corinthians 3:10

Contact Details

David Skipp
Synod Property Development Worker
44 Juniper Drive
Brandon Groves
South Ockendon
Essex, RM15 6TW
Tel/fax: 01708 852338
Email: propertydevelop@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

Thames North Trust: 020 7799 6000

Large print copies of this newsletter are available from Synod Office.

Further Website's that may be of use are:

http://www.urc.org.uk/what_we_do/plato/plato

<http://www.ecclesiastical.com/ourproducts/insurance/churchinsurance/>