



Welcome to **February's** email bulletin. This month our topic is **Quinquennial Inspections**. You can also view an illustrated version of this bulletin [online](#). If you have a subject that you would like us to cover in a future bulletin let us know by emailing the team at info@spabfim.org.uk.

Things to think about...

In 1952, a Church of England report, *The Preservation of Our Churches*, identified the lack of regular monitoring of the condition of churches as a problem. Dealing with repairs and maintenance in a timely fashion was deemed to be essential, so it was agreed that a system of regular professional inspections should be implemented. As a result, formal quinquennial (five-yearly) inspections were introduced as a statutory requirement through *The Inspection of Churches Measure 1955*. Many other denominations and a large number of secular organisations, such as the National Trust and the Crown Estate, have since seen the wisdom of this idea and have chosen to implement a similar approach to their routine professional inspections.

In essence, Quinquennial Inspections (QIs) involve a thorough survey of all aspects of a building's fabric and are intended to identify any problems that have developed since the last time it was inspected. A five-yearly inspection is generally frequent enough to spot problems before significant damage occurs although the system works best if the QI is supplemented by informal yearly inspections made by those responsible for the building.

The Quinquennial Inspection Report (QIR) is usually presented in a standardised format and contains vital information such as the current and ongoing repair needs of the building as well as suggestions for 'good housekeeping' and maintenance. Reports should be concise, easy to read, written in non-technical language and preferably illustrated with photographs.

Things to do...

- When you receive the report read it carefully. You might find it helpful to walk around the building with the report so that you can identify the defects it refers to.
- If you are finding it difficult to understand the report or the recommendations for repair, contact your professional adviser and ask for their help.
- Consider asking your architect or building surveyor to explain their report to you in person. You may need to cover your professional adviser's time and travel costs but you will save money in the longer term by focusing more effectively on the immediate repair priorities.
- Discuss the contents of the report with your fabric committee or parochial church council and agree a plan of

action to tackle any necessary housekeeping issues, maintenance or repairs.

- If major repair works are needed contact your professional adviser for advice on how to tackle them. You will need their expertise in terms of drawing up specifications for the work. They may also be able to help you identify potential sources of funding.

Further information

Guidance from the Methodist Church on [Quinquennial Inspections](#)

Guidance from the Church of England on [Quinquennial Inspections](#)

[The Appointment of Professionals for Quinquennial Inspections](#) by Jonathan Taylor (available on the Building Conservation Directory website)

[Programming Repairs](#) by Martin Ashley (available on the Building Conservation Directory website)

Need more help?

If you have any questions about maintenance or repair issues contact our [Technical Helpline](#) for advice and guidance. This service is normally available on **Fridays** between **9.30am and 3.30pm** on **0207 456 0916**. Alternatively you can mail your questions to advice@spabfm.org.uk. Copies of the SPAB's range of Technical Pamphlets and Information Sheets are available to purchase from our [online bookshop](#).

One Church 100 Uses

If you are looking for ideas and inspiration to help you utilise your place of worship more fully and make it a vibrant community hub, an event hosted by Lord Andrew Mawson and [One Church 100 Uses](#) in Manchester next month might be of interest. This interactive day-long event takes place on 25th March at [The Monastery](#) and is designed to reach out to people with responsibility or passion for their place of worship. Topics to be covered will include revitalising church buildings; bid writing; funding; energy and environmental conservation issues; legal challenges; engaging the wider community; risk assessments; and many case studies. A number of high-profile speakers have already been secured including Baroness Andrews (English Heritage) and Hazel Blears MP. Further details are available [online](#).

Sara Crofts Faith in Maintenance Project Director

Stave off decay by daily care ~ William Morris 1877

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