



## Caring for and Securing our Church Buildings: Detailed FAQs

### 1. Roof inspections and lead theft

Whilst undertaking your daily outdoor exercise, or while walking the dog, take the opportunity to undertake a visual inspection of the roof area from the ground. If you should notice any cracked, displaced or broken slates or tiles, please report this to your church architect.

Lead roofs are vulnerable to theft. Should you identify the lead has been vandalised or stolen, immediately report the crime to the Police and your insurance company. If your local roofers are unable to attend in light of the coronavirus restrictions, please be in contact with your church architect for recommendations and guidance.

### 2. Rainwater goods

Inspect rainwater goods from the ground. Report any loss or damage to your church architect. If you should note any blocked gullies, clear away blockages safely.

### 3. External walls

Whilst circulating the building undertaking a visual check, should you note any damage, cracks or substantial movement please report findings to your church architect.

### 4. Ventilation

Whilst the church building remains closed good ventilation is essential. Ensure ventilation grills, air bricks, louvres etc. are clear allowing for good air circulation to reduce damp and condensation.

### 5. Birds and Bats

Check birds are not able to enter the building through any broken mesh. If you have identified any vulnerabilities, please report this to your church architect.

If you wish to protect the church interior from bat droppings and urine while the church is closed. Cover surfaces where you know bat droppings or urine will accumulate. You can use plastic sheeting, fabric such as old sheets or banqueting roll. If you are concerned about the smell from bats while the church is closed, scatter the covering with something like dried lavender.

#### 6. Doors and Windows

Check operation of locks and bolts. Make sure the building has been secured.

#### 7. Large Trees

Monitor any large trees near the building. Check for any dead or broken branches that could pose a risk to the building. Report any concerns to either your church architect or regular churchyard maintenance contractors.

#### 8. Organs

There can be no precise prediction as to the results of an organ being out of use during the closure period. Dampness and or excessive dryness can, and the effects of dampness and/or excessive dryness can usually be offset by some fairly firm playing, though in some cases a visit from the tuner might be called for. When the church reopens, and your organist still has any concerns we can put you in touch with our DAC organ advisers or contact your organ maintenance contractors.

#### 9. Security - Valuable items and money

Sadly, crime can still take place during this crisis. Secure any letterboxes or other points of entry. Please make sure whilst the church is closed to lock away any valuable items and make sure the wall box/donation boxes are emptied. Should you notice any evidence of a break-in such as a broken door or window. Call the Police immediately and follow their guidance. Report the damage to your insurers, Archdeacon and church architect.

#### 10. Electrical equipment

All non-essential electrical equipment should be switched off to reduce any fire risks. Please follow your fire and electrical risk assessment guidance.

#### 11. Alarm systems

Ensure any alarm systems including roof alarms, CCTV, fire and any other alarms are all in good working order and switched on. Should any alarms be activated your first step should be to call the Police and follow their guidance.

#### 12. Electrical, Fire and other regular testing/inspections

Any regular or planned testing/inspections will be postponed during the closure. Should you have any concerns contact your insurers and church architect.

#### 13. Planned repairs or major projects

All works should be postponed whilst the building is closed during the pandemic. If you are concerned or have any questions left unanswered, please speak with your church architect or our diocesan church buildings adviser.

#### 14. Water systems – stagnant water

If no-one will access the building, and nothing is in use (such as an organ humidifier or heating) that needs a water supply, turn off the water supply at the mains. If it is appropriate to drain the system, do so. If the water is left on, make sure that there are no taps left running or leaking fittings.

Stagnant water in the system may become a problem and pose a serious health concern once the church reopens. Firstly, please follow all Legionella guidance and your completed risk assessment, issued by your insurers. If you are concerned please call your utility provider and your insurance company. Many churches may still have lead pipes. Before the church reopens it would be worth scheduling testing and making sure you give time to run fresh water through your system. Your church architect can advise.

#### 15. Heating

As we approach summer and warmer months, we recommend heating systems be switched to the summer setting. This will maintain a minimum temperature to protect from frost. If you are one of the small number of churches running a conservation heating regime this should be left in operation.

Boilers should remain switched on due to any cold night frost to prevent any pipes from freezing. Please follow all guidance and recommendations set out in the manufacturer's instructions.

It is important as the buildings are closed to reduce our carbon footprint.

#### 16. Cleaning

Before the announcement of our buildings closing there had been issued guidance from CBC regarding deep cleaning. During closure cleaning must cease. If you have any concerns do be in touch with our church buildings adviser.

#### 17. Headstones & Monuments

If you should note during a visual inspection a falling headstone or monument that could pose a health and safety risk. If able, follow your risk assessment and insurers guidelines to minimise health and safety risk to others and report to your church architect.