



Maintenance Checklist for United Reformed Church Buildings

Name of Church:

Introduction to the Maintenance Checklist

Thank you for helping to care for your church building. Regular inspections and planned maintenance are essential to ensuring that church buildings remain safe, welcoming, and fit for worship and community use, both now and for future generations.

Those who regularly use and care for the building are often the first to notice changes that may indicate defects or maintenance issues. Early identification of problems allows informed decisions to be made about what action is needed and when. Working with an appropriately qualified professional adviser can help prevent minor defects developing into more significant and costly repairs. Regular checks also provide an opportunity to monitor the effectiveness of previous maintenance and repair work.

Using this checklist will help your church organise maintenance activities, manage responsibilities, plan budgets, and maintain a record of observations, inspections, and completed work.

Using the Checklist

This document provides a checklist to support maintenance planning for United Reformed Church buildings. Churches should adapt this template to reflect the specific needs of their building, site, and insurance requirements.

For example, you may wish to record the months when gutters should be checked following leaf fall, note cyclical maintenance tasks, or identify when external rainwater goods, timberwork, or other building elements require repainting or repair.

The checklist is most effective when it is reviewed and updated regularly. Consider including maintenance as a standing agenda item at Church Meetings, Elders' Meetings, Property Committee meetings, or other relevant groups responsible for the care of the building. All inspections, observations, and completed works should be dated and recorded.

It is also helpful to include plans, photographs, or sketches of the church building, grounds, and key elevations at the end of the document. These

can assist volunteers, contractors, and professional advisers in identifying and monitoring areas of concern.

Risk Assessment

Suitable risk assessments should be in place for all maintenance activities, particularly where volunteers are involved. Where possible, routine inspections and maintenance tasks should be carried out by at least two people. Volunteers should never undertake activities that place their health or safety at risks.

Anyone working alone should remain at ground level unless safe and authorised access arrangements are available. They should have access to a mobile phone, inform another person of their planned activities, and confirm when they have completed their work.

Churches must ensure that all maintenance activities are carried out in accordance with their health and safety policies and any applicable legal requirements.

Costs

Maintenance costs should be identified and included within the church's annual budget and financial planning process. Obtaining quotations and arranging works can take time, so it is advisable to plan ahead wherever possible.

The checklist should be updated with estimated and actual costs as information becomes available. Maintaining accurate records will help the church anticipate future expenditure and support long-term stewardship of its building assets.

Useful Equipment for Maintenance Inspections

The following items may be useful when carrying out routine inspections:

- Gloves (disposable and heavy duty)
- Torch
- Binoculars
- Dust mask or respirator (for dusty or enclosed spaces)
- Safety glasses or goggles
- First aid kit

- Camera or mobile phone camera
- Measuring stick and/or tape measure
- Clipboard or notebook for recording observations
- A plan, sketch, or photograph of the building to identify and record the location of defects or areas requiring monitoring

Working with Volunteers, Contractors and Professional Advisers

Many United Reformed Church buildings are supported by volunteers who undertake routine inspections and basic maintenance tasks. Depending on the nature of the building and the work required, churches may also engage contractors to undertake specialist or higher-risk tasks, particularly where access at height or specialist expertise is needed.

Churches should seek advice from appropriately qualified professional advisers when dealing with significant maintenance issues, repairs, alterations, or specialist conservation matters. Professional advice can also assist with the appointment and management of contractors.

The United Reformed Church requires local churches to obtain a quinquennial inspection of their buildings. The resulting report should be used to inform the church's maintenance planning and priorities.

While a quinquennial inspection report is not itself a maintenance plan, it provides valuable information that should guide ongoing maintenance decisions.

To make best use of this checklist, churches are encouraged to consult their quinquennial inspector or another suitably qualified professional adviser regarding specific maintenance tasks. Tasks requiring professional advice or specialist expertise may be marked with an asterisk (*) in the checklist.

Major repairs, alterations, and certain maintenance works may require consultation with the Synod Property Officer.

Disclaimer

This checklist is intended to support local United Reformed Churches in planning and managing the maintenance of their buildings. It should be adapted to reflect local circumstances and does not replace legal obligations, insurance requirements, health and safety responsibilities, property regulations, or the need to obtain any necessary permissions and approvals.

The checklist may not cover every aspect of building maintenance or every statutory requirement applicable to a particular church. Churches should seek appropriate professional advice where necessary.

Regular maintenance remains one of the most effective ways to protect church buildings, manage costs, and ensure that they continue to serve worshipping communities and the wider public safely and effectively.

Name of Church:

Names and Contact Details (Fabric Officers/Church warden/Treasurer/Volunteers)

Name	Contact	Note

Names and Contact Details (Professional advisor and relevant contractors)

Name	Contact	Note

1.1 Roofs

Ref	Building Element	Maintenance Task	Person best placed to do the task	Suggested frequency	Annual Cost £	Q1 Jan to Mar	Q2 Apr to Jun	Q3 Jul to Sep	Q4 Oct to Dec	Note: Observation and date	Note: Action and date	Comments
1.1.1	Roof areas generally	Inspect roof coverings from the ground and accessible high points. Note any loss / damage / heavy moss. Is a defect the cause of internal dampness / leaks?	Volunteer if appropriate and/or contractor if necessary	After stormy weather Twice per year								
1.1.2	Slate / tile roofs and vertical cladding	Inspect for cracked, displaced or broken slates / roof tiles. Note the need for repairs* and options to repair / replace to match existing materials	* Contractor	Annually								
1.1.3	Sheet metal roofs and cladding	Inspect the condition of the panels, joints and clips. Note the need for repairs* and undertake temporary repair of splits	* Contractor	Annually								
1.1.4	Lead junction weathering and flashings	Inspect for any unfixed lead sections or cracked mortar. Note if repair is needed*	* Contractor	Annually								

1.2 Rainwater Goods

Ref	Building Element	Maintenance Task	Person best placed to do the task	Suggested frequency	Annual Cost £	Q1 Jan to Mar	Q2 Apr to Jun	Q3 Jul to Sep	Q4 Oct to Dec	Note: Observation and date	Note: Action and date	Comments
1.2.1	Rainwater goods generally	Inspect rainwater goods from the ground and accessible high points and report any loss / damage / water leakage. Temporary fix or minimise / divert leaking water	Volunteer if appropriate and/or contractor if necessary	A: During / after rain B: Twice per year								
1.2.2	Rainwater removal from valley / parapet gutters	Clear rainwater goods of debris and ensure overflows are clear. Rod if necessary	Volunteer if appropriate and/or contractor if necessary	Twice per year								
1.2.3	Rainwater goods – external inspection for cracks and leaks	Inspect rainwater goods for cracks and leaks. Repair or note the need to replace in matching material any cracked / leaking sections	Volunteer if appropriate and/or contractor if necessary	Twice per year								
1.2.4	Rainwater goods – vegetation, leaves and other blockages that need clearing	Check and clear identified blockages	Volunteer if appropriate and/or contractor if necessary	Twice per year								
1.2.5	Rainwater goods - repainting	Repaint*	Contractor	7 years max								

			* Consult with Professional advisor on specification									
1.2.6	Below ground drainage	Check and clear all gullies. Repair open joints in perimeter drainage channels. Open inspection chambers and check drains run freely to soak away or drain. Check for tree roots causing damage	Surface checks – volunteer if appropriate Underground - contractor	Twice per year								

1.3 External

Ref	Building Element	Maintenance Task	Person best placed to do the task	Suggested Frequency	Annual Cost £	Q1 Jan to Mar	Q2 Apr to Jun	Q3 Jul to Sep	Q4 Oct to Dec	Note: Observation and date	Note: Action and date	Comments
1.3.1	External walls generally	Inspect external walls from the ground and accessible high points. Note any damage, gathering information on any signs of movement or cracks. Photograph and monitor by measurement	Volunteer	After stormy weather Annually * As agreed with professional advisor								
1.3.2	External walls, copings and parapets	Check for loose copings. Remove any vegetation and ivy. Consult* on specification and the need for any consents to repoint any open joints / re-fix copings	* Volunteer if appropriate and/or contractor if necessary	Annually								

1.3.3	Ventilation	Ensure ventilation grills, air bricks, louvres etc. are clear. Maintain opening window vents	Volunteer if appropriate and/or contractor if necessary	Annually								
1.3.4	Bird screens	Check that birds cannot get into the tower or building through broken mesh	Volunteer	Annually								
1.3.5	Leaded light windows	Inspect and note any defects to window protection / rusting fixings, lead comes, deformed, loose/broken glass, rusting of support rods and wire ties. Clear condensation drainage holes	Volunteer	Twice per year								
1.3.6	Non-leaded light windows	Inspect windows, maintain, including minor essential repairs	Contractor	Annually								
1.3.7	External timberwork	Repaint/stain to match existing specification*	* Contractor	7 years max								
1.3.8	Doors and windows	Check and make secure - operation of lock, bolts and hinges. Oil if needed	Volunteer	Twice per year								
1.3.9	Large trees near the building	Note any dead branches and/or any branches touching the building and arrange pruning*	* Volunteer Avoid nesting bird season	Annually								

1.3.10	Boundary walls, monuments, memorials and paths	Inspect for stability, condition and any signs of collapse, damage or hazard	Volunteer if appropriate and/or contractor if necessary	Twice per year									
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1.4 Internal

Ref	Building Element	Maintenance Task	Person best placed to do the task	Suggested Frequency	Annual Cost £	Q1 Jan to Mar	Q2 Apr to Jun	Q3 Jul to Sep	Q4 Oct to Dec	Note: Observation and date	Note: Action and date	Comments
1.4.1	Damp	Inspect each part of the building for damp or staining, checking the ceiling and walls	Volunteer	Monthly								
1.4.2	Ventilation	Ventilate the church. Ensure carpets and furnishings are dry and fittings secure	Volunteer	Monthly								
1.4.3	Internal spaces generally	Inspect in roof spaces and all internal spaces, particularly below and adjacent to gutters. Note any evidence or leaks (see item 1.1.1)	Volunteer	After stormy weather Annually								

1.4.4	Internal fabric and structure	Inspect internal structure and fabric including roof timbers and bell frame and report any signs of structural movement / damp / fungus. Note and seek advice* on monitoring and the need for further investigation	Volunteer *	Annually								
1.4.5	Exposed woodwork	Inspect exposed woodwork, report any beetle infestation or rot/ decay. Note and seek advice* on monitoring and the need for further investigation	Volunteer *	Twice per year								
1.4.6	Roof and floor voids	Inspect roof and floor voids. Note any signs of vermin and any beetles or fresh wood dust to inform QI visit	Volunteer	Annually								

1.5 Building Services

Ref	Building Element	Maintenance Task	Person best placed to do the task	Suggested Frequency	Annual Cost £	Q1 Jan to Mar	Q2 Apr to Jun	Q3 Jul to Sep	Q4 Oct to Dec	Note: Observation and date	Note: Action and date	Comments
1.5.1	Heating and hot water system	Check operation. Report faults	Volunteer	Annually								

		Gas boiler (if applicable) inspection and testing	Gas Safe registered contractor	Annually								
		Oil boiler (if applicable) inspection and testing	OFTEC registered contractor	Annually								
1.5.2	Water systems	Check taps and pipes for leaks. Ensure insulation is in place	Volunteer	Twice per year								
1.5.3	Portable Electrical equipment	Formal inspection and test	Specialist contractor	Annually								
1.5.4	Electrical fixed wiring	Routine checks	NICEIC/ECA registered contractor	Annually								
		Periodic inspection and testing	NICEIC/ECA registered contractor	3 to 5 years								
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	Volunteer If there is a strike you must use a specialist lightning protection contractor or	After a suspected strike Recommend every 11 months								The frequency of periodic inspection by specialist depends on the system in place, insurance requirements,

		Periodic inspection and testing	electrical contractor									etc. so check and consult professional advisor to confirm
			Specialist contractor									
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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