# Keeping Churches Safe and Compliant with the Law

## What, When, Why, Who, How Much?

Faith in our Future
Diocese of Monmouth
Esgobaeth Mynwy

Esgobaeth Llandaf
Diocese of Llandaff
Mae Ffydd Yn Cyfrif | Faith Matters

Produced by the Church Buildings Team, Dioceses of Monmouth and Llandaff

The tables below summarise the things churches need to produce or obtain to be compliant with Welsh and UK law. As well as keeping users of the church and the building safe, this will also protect the Ministry Area from enforcement by bodies such as the Health & Safety Executive.

## 1. Risk Assessments

These need to be produced by a 'competent' person and need to be 'suitable and sufficient'. In other words, they need to be specific to the building or activity and identify all risks. **Unless a representative of the church is trained and competent to produce them, they should be produced by a professional consultant.** They then need to be reviewed by the church and updated if there are any changes. The date of the last review should be recorded on the risk assessment.

| | **What?** | **When?** | **Why?** | **Who?** | **How much?** (Range from small to large church) |
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| Asbestos Survey, Management Plan and Register | An **Asbestos Survey** should be carried out by a competent, independent asbestos surveyor and a report produced identifying any potential asbestos-containing materials.<br><br>An **Asbestos Management Plan** is then produced showing steps that need to be taken to manage the risk (e.g. not disturbing asbestos roofing) and an **Asbestos Register** of the location and condition of asbestos-containing materials. | **One-off** professional report (unless the building changes)<br><br>**Annual** review of Management Plan and Register, visual inspection of condition of asbestos-containing materials and recording any progress made with recommendations in the management plan.<br><br>A further **Refurbishment and Demolition Asbestos Survey** is needed if there is intrusive work e.g. removing a ceiling. | Reducing risk of exposure to asbestos, which is linked to mesothelioma.<br><br>**Required for every public building** under *Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012*. | UKAS-accredited **asbestos surveyor.**<br><br>Should be independent/a "consultant" i.e. doesn't do asbestos removal and therefore no incentive to upsell. | **£500-£1500** |
| Fire Risk Assessment | A report assessing fire hazards, risks to the building and users and identifying necessary safety measures. | **One-off** professional report (unless the building changes)<br><br>**Annual** review of fire risk assessment, assessing any changes to the building or its use, noting progress with any recommendations. A review should also be carried out **after an incident or near miss.** | Reducing risk of harm to people or buildings by identifying appropriate fire mitigation.<br><br>**Required for every public building** under *Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005* | **Fire Risk Assessor** with accreditation, any of the following:<br><br>• IFE (Institute of Fire Engineers)<br>• BAFE SP205 Company Accreditation<br>• IFSM (Institute of Fire Safety Managers)<br>• IFPO (Institute of Fire Prevention Officers) Tier 2/3<br><br>Should be independent/a "consultant" i.e. doesn't sell fire alarm installation etc. and therefore no incentive to upsell. | **£350-£1500** |
| Health and Safety Risk Assessments | Assessment of any health and safety risks specific to the church, churchyard and their use | **One-off** production of specific risk assessments. | Reducing risk of harm by identifying and mitigating health and safety risks. | For professional assessments: | **£400-£2000** |

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| | and occupancy. Individual risk assessments should be produced for activities/events e.g. weddings, Tower tours, fêtes.<br><br>Risk assessments must:<br>1. Identify hazards<br>2. Assess who might be harmed and how<br>3. Evaluate existing risk mitigation and need for further mitigation<br>4. Record findings<br>5. Be reviewed annually or after an incident or near miss | **Annual** review of risk assessments and progress with any recommendations, or **after an incident or near miss**<br><br>**Accidents and near misses** should be recorded in line with the Ministry Area Health and Safety Policy | **Required for every public building** under *Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974* | Minimum: **NEBOSH** (National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health) General Certificate.<br><br>Desirable: **IOSH** (Institution of Occupational Safety and Health) membership. | |
| Legionella Risk Assessment | Assessment of water systems for risk of Legionella. Where churches have stored hot water | **One-off** production of a specific risk assessment<br><br>Review **every 2 years** | Reduce risk of Legionella growth, aerosol spread and infection.<br><br>**Required for public buildings with water systems** under *Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002* and HSE guidance *ACOP L8* | **Legionella risk assessor** competent under HSE ACOP L8 | **£250-£1500** |
| Access Audit | An assessment of the accessibility of the building for people with disabilities. | No set period. Periodic or when building is altered. | Not a legal requirement to produce an access audit, but helps to identify "reasonable adjustments" to improve accessibility required under the *Equality Act 2010* | Can be done by the church using a template. Professional assessment can be done by an **accessibility consultant** or **building surveyor** with experience in *Equality Act* compliance. | **£500-£2500** |

## 2. Specialist Inspections / Servicing / Certification

The inspections, servicing and reports below should be carried out by a **competent person** with appropriate expertise and accreditation. **Physical copies of certificates should be kept in the Church Log Book folder.** The renewal periods of **Gas Safety checks (annual)** and **LOLER inspections (6-monthly)** are defined in law. Other renewal periods are strongly recommended for safety by British Standards, based on risk, but are not defined in law.

| | **What?** | **When?** | **Why?** | **Who?** (Click links to search) | **How much?** (Range from small to large church) |
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| Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) | Report and recommendations on condition of electrical installation.<br><br>Electric heating and appliances powered by fused spurs should be included in this inspection. | **Every 5 years** or when recommended by electrician if sooner. Date of last and next inspection usually displayed on sticker on distribution board. | Reducing risk of shocks and fire. Compliance with *Electricity at Work Regulations 1989*. | NICEIC or NAPIT **approved electrician** | **£500 - £3000** |
| Portable Appliance Test (PAT) | Testing all plug-in appliances, applying dated stickers to appliances, producing a report with a list of all tested items and results. | **Annual**<br><br>Date of last inspection usually displayed on stickers on appliance | Reducing risk of shocks and fire. Church is required to manage risk posed by these appliances. Although there is no legal requirement to test them annually, this is recommended. | **Competent person**. Usually specialist PAT testing companies or electrician. | **£150-£500** |
| Gas/LPG Boiler Service | Inspection and service of boiler and appliances with Gas Safety certificate produced. | **Annual (legally)**<br><br>Date of last inspection sometimes displayed on sticker on boiler | Reducing risk of carbon monoxide poisoning, fires and explosions. **Required** under *Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998* | Gas Safe **engineer** | **£150 per boiler** |
| Oil Boiler Service | Inspection and service of oil boiler and tank with OFTEC certificate produced | **Annual**<br><br>Date of last inspection sometimes displayed on sticker on boiler | Reducing risk of oil leaks, carbon monoxide poisoning and fire. Duty of care under *Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974* | OFTEC **engineer** | **£250** |
| Fire Extinguisher Servicing | Check, service and repair fire extinguishers to ensure they are ready for use in a fire | **Annual**<br><br>Date of last inspection on sticker on each extinguisher.<br><br>**Record date in Fire Safety Log Book** | Ensuring extinguishers are ready for use and accessible in a fire. Compliance with *Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005* and *BS 5306-3* | BAFE-certified **inspector** | **£80-£800** |
| Emergency Lighting Servicing | Inspection for damage and test of battery to ensure lights work when power is cut | **Annual** | Ensuring safe evacuation in the event of a power outage. Compliance with | **Competent person.** Could be a fire servicing company or electrician. | **£150-800** |

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| | | Certificate of completion.<br><br>**Record date in Fire Safety Log Book** | *Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005* and *BS 5266-1* | | |
| Fire Alarm Servicing | Maintenance and testing of alarm systems | **Annual**<br><br>Certificate of completion.<br><br>**Record date in Fire Safety Log Book** | Ensuring early detection and alert in case of fire. Compliance with *Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 BS 5839-1* | FIA-trained technician or BAFE-certified **fire alarm contractor** | **£250-£1500** |
| Lightning Protection System Test | Test the conductor for function and condition | **Annual recommended**<br><br>Certificate of completion. | Reducing risk of lightning damage by safely diverting electricity to the ground. Compliance with *Electricity at Work Regulations 1989* and *BS EN 62305* | **Specialist lightning protection engineer** (e.g. Dawson Steeplejacks or G&S Steeplejacks) | **£250-£750** |
| Lift Inspection (LOLER) | Inspection of passenger/goods lifts and recommendations, with written report. | **Every 6 months (legally)**<br><br>Certificate of completion | Reducing risk to users posed by mechanical failure. **Required** under *Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER)* | **Insurance engineer surveyor** or **LOLER competent person** | **£250-£500 per visit** |
| Fall Arrest / Roof Access Inspection | Inspection and testing of fall arrest systems (e.g. anchor points, rails) and equipment for safety. | **Annual** | Reduce risk of falls in higher-risk areas. Compliance with *Work at Height Regulations 2005 (WAHR)* | **Specialist fall arrest system inspector** | **£350-£600** |
| Security System Servicing | Inspection and servicing of security alarms, roof alarms and CCTV systems. | **Annual** | Prevention of theft and arson. This is not legally required but may be an insurance requirement. Confirm with Ecclesiastical Insurance. CCTV data handling should follow ICO (Information Commissioner's Office) guidance. | **Security system servicing companies** | **£350-£500 per system** |
| Hearing Loop Service | Testing and calibration of the hearing loop to ensure it works for people with hearing impairments. | **Annual** | Ensuring people with hearing aids can participate in events in the church. Reasonable adjustment under the *Equality Act 2010* | **Hearing loop engineer** | **£150-£400** |
| Flagpole Inspection | Structural inspection of the flagpole for safety | **Annual** | Compliance with *Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER)* and duty of care under *Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974* | **Competent flagpole inspector** | **£100-£500** |
| Tree Survey | Inspection of trees for safety with recommendations for work | **Every 5 years** or more frequently based on higher risk to people or buildings | Duty under *Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974* and *Occupiers' Liability Act 1957* | **Qualified arboricultural consultant** | **£100-£500** |

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| Bat / Ecology Survey | Written report to record the presence of bats and other species (birds such as swifts or owls, reptiles, or other protected wildlife) and make recommendations to comply with legislation. | **Before work affecting likely habitats** (e.g. roofs, towers, stonework, trees) | Some species are protected under the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* and the *Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017*. Bats have particular protection. Disturbing bats or damaging a roost is a criminal offence. | **Licensed ecologist – CIEEM member** | **£300-£2000** |
| Bell Inspection | Written report on the condition of the bells making recommendations for any remedial work needed. | **Every 5 years** | Duty under *Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974* | **Diocesan Bells Advisor** or **Bell Specialist** | **£0-£1000** |

## 3. Record-Keeping and In-House Inspections

Churches should keep thorough records of compliance and work done to the church for use by architects, contractors, the inspecting surveyors and any enforcement bodies.

| | **What?** | **When?** | **Why?** | **Who?** | **How much?** (Range from small church to large church) |
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| Church Log Book | A single ring binder containing copies of all the certificates, risk assessments, servicing records and reports mentioned in this document, apart from the information recorded in the Fire Safety Log Book (see below).<br><br>The church should also keep a copy of the quinquennial inspection and recommendations in the folder and update this when any recommendations are completed or any other work is done to the church. | Every time documents are reviewed, new reports obtained or servicing and inspection carried out. | The Log Book is a central record for the church building and churchyard, including work done, certificates, reports and risk assessments. The church should keep one for:<br>1. **Compliance record**: The log book provides an easily-accessible and auditable record of compliance with the law.<br>2. **Scheduling**: Future inspections and reviews can be scheduled as the last date is known.<br>3. **Safety**: Contractors e.g. electricians can see if there is any asbestos present, when wiring was last tested etc.<br>4. **Continuity**: Easy handover when churchwardens and other officers change.<br>5. **Inspection**: A record of work done to the church helps the inspecting surveyors diagnose problems and make recommendations. | **Church Officers** | **£0** |

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| Fire Safety Log Book | Fire Safety tests and record-keeping. Dates and results should be recorded in the Fire Safety Log Book. | **Weekly**<br>• Fire Alarm<br><br>**Monthly**<br>• Emergency Lighting 'flick' test (with a key, or at the fuse board)<br>• Fire Door operational checks<br>• Means of escape inspections (no obstructions, exits open easily, signage)<br>• Fire extinguisher visual check (location, pressure gauge, obstruction, damage)<br><br>**Annual**<br>• Date of Fire Risk Assessment review and actions taken<br>• Servicing dates (see table above)<br>• Fire Drill<br><br>**Ad Hoc**<br>• Training: date, people and type<br>• Fire incidents and false alarms<br>• Maintenance and repairs | Compliance with *Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005* | A **Responsible Person** must be nominated to ensure compliance with fire safety legislation. | **£0** |
| Churchyard Inspection | Full churchyard visual inspection including identifying any dangerous headstones/memorials.<br><br>The safety of memorials should be tested by a memorial mason when they are identified as high risk in the church's risk assessment. | **Annual** | Duty under *Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974* and *Occupiers' Liability Act 1957* | **Church Officers**<br><br>Professional assessment of monuments by a **memorial mason** | **£0** |
| SmartWater (or other approved forensic marking) | Ensure signage is displayed, a list of locations kept where it has been applied, the date of last application known. | Reapplication is recommended **every 5 years** as it begins to wear off after this point. It can be tested with a UV lamp to ensure it still fluoresces. | To cover metal theft, Ecclesiastical Insurance require the marking system is applied, registered with the provider and signage displayed.<br><br>Forensic marking systems can also help with recovery of stolen metal. | A contractor able to safely apply SmartWater | Discounted packs for Ecclesiastical members.<br><br>**£500-£1500** |