

The Church of Scotland General Trustees

Guidelines for the Preparation of Quinquennial Reports

Types of Report

The Church of Scotland has **two** types of Quinquennial Report. The **Full Quinquennium**, which is carried out every second quinquennium (at 10-year intervals) and an **Interim Quinquennium**, carried out on the fifth year in every ten. Interim Reports ideally should be carried out by suitably qualified professionals but this is not essential and it can be undertaken by unqualified individuals who have suitable experience, both to undertake an inspection and additionally to prepare a brief written report.

Purpose of the Report

The **Full Quinquennial Report** has a twofold purpose. Firstly, to create an accurate record as to the condition of the structure at the time of inspection, and secondly to act as a document that can be referred to over the longer term. It is often helpful to look back at the condition of a building some years before, and this is best achieved by the use of photographs, supported by a narrative.

Engagement of Professionals

Inspecting professionals should be suitably qualified members either of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors or the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland, or the equivalent; in both cases, having a minimum of **five years' post qualification experience** and experienced in historic buildings. Ideally, the surveyor or architect should have a Building Conservation qualification. Suitably qualified persons should carry a **minimum of £750,000 Professional Indemnity** cover.

Extent of Inspection

The inspecting parties should prepare a report of sufficient depth to be able to accurately record the overall condition of the structure. If, due to height, certain parts of the buildings cannot be readily examined without high level equipment, and it is considered that this should be undertaken, then the report should make reference to that. Simply stating that the top of the tower was beyond inspection due to height as the inspecting party's ladder only extended to four metres, would not be acceptable.

It would not be necessary in the majority of cases to lift floor boards unless there are signs that suggest that there is a strong likelihood of defects in certain parts. If boards are not lifted and there are signs of problems, then the report should be qualified and suitable advice given to have them lifted by a joiner or the like and a further inspection carried out.

There would not be a need to carry out tests on any of the services but a broad opinion based on a visual inspection should be given as to whether any of the systems show evidence of age or defects which could have an effect on efficiency and safety of the subjects.

Evidence of asbestos within the building should be clearly highlighted. If there is doubt as to whether any material might contain asbestos, then advice should be given over that material being analysed, as an additional measure.

The Report Layout

A brief history of the building would be helpful, but no in-depth information is required. However the Report should indicate whether the building is **Listed**, as being of historic importance. Plans of the building would only be necessary if it is considered essential to support narrative. The report should be prepared on a column basis, with sub-headings of **Element, Description, Condition, Recommended Repairs, Priority and Indicative Costs**. **Priority** is divided between **Urgent, Essential** and **Desirable**.

Urgent covers remedial works necessary at the time of inspection and to be carried out without delay.

Essential refers to works which should be carried out within five years or a lesser time if stated within the Report.

Desirable relates to works which should be carried out some time in the future, funds permitting.

Great emphasis is placed on the need for **photographs** which often provide a better record for reference than narrative. Photographs should be of sufficient size to illustrate defects, ideally to size A5. The report should illustrate **every elevation** of the building to a minimum of A5. Photographs should be in **colour**. If adjoining buildings prevent the photographing of some elevations, then this should be stated.

'One liners' in relation to description and condition of the building should be avoided. For example, a simple comment like 'some defective cement fillets' would not be acceptable and should be specific as to where the defects are.

There should be an avoidance of technical terms unless they are explained. For example, making reference to the building *skews being porous* is not helpful unless the reader knows what *skews* are. These Reports will often be read by non-technical people.

In making recommendations, reference should be made to the type of materials to be adopted. A general comment of 'lime pointing' would not be sufficient and should be qualified by the type of lime. If the inspection party is not sufficiently knowledgeable in the use of lime, then reference should be made to the need to take additional advice.

It is accepted that with regard to **indicative costs** these can vary considerably from one tradesman to another. A general view only should be given and reference should be made as to whether the figure does or does not include VAT.

Number of Copies of the Report

Three copies (principal copy for the Presbytery and one copy each for the Congregational Fabric Convener and the General Trustees) of the report should be provided. These should be suitably bound as to be durable over the long term.

Signing Off

The Report should be signed by the person who undertook the inspection stating his or her qualification and the date of the inspection.