



As part of its strategy for ensuring that our church buildings are an asset, rather than a liability, in October 1993 the Synod approved a synod-funded scheme for the inspection of church buildings by Stone Ecclesiastical. The Synod later approved a scheme for generous financial assistance to churches which undertook the full schedule of work recommended in the inspection reports. The cost of the work arising from this first phase of inspection reports amounted to more than £1.75M, of which £600,000 was provided by the synod by way of grants. These figures exclude the cost of major building redevelopment that arose from the inspections.

Much of the backlog of repairs and maintenance having been addressed in the first phase of inspections, in October 1995 the Synod endorsed a policy, which is a legal requirement for Listed churches, that each church be inspected by a suitably qualified professional every five years.

At the October 1998 Synod, it was resolved that the Synod should commission Stone Ecclesiastical to conduct a second phase of visual inspections of all URC-owned church buildings in the Wessex Synod. The inspections were carried out in 1999. It is intended that the recommended works should be completed before the next quinquennial inspection. The synod has also provided financial support to local churches who carry out works that are recommended in the report of the phase two inspections (➤ 041)

The proper maintenance of buildings is a specific responsibility of the local church. The most effective way of exercising this responsibility is by taking regular action to prevent problems and by early rectification of problems should they occur (➤ 811).