



The  
United  
Reformed  
Church

# Help and Advice Group

Northern Synod Office, 4 College Lane, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 8JJ (0191-232 1168)

## Bulletin 30: BUILDING SAFETY

The Help & Advice Group was set up by Synod in 2009, to support local churches in being informed and effective in their life and mission. The Group is made up of four members of local churches, together with administrative support from the Trust Officer. We are willing to try to provide specific advice or organise training days on particular topics. Please get in touch if you have questions or wish to suggest a training or discussion event.

This article is part of a series giving an overview of particular subjects on interest for local churches. We also circulate general updates from time to time. Bulletins will also be posted on the members' area of the website with direct links to other websites.

Where readers are directed to web-based resources, the Synod Office is willing to respond to reasonable requests for printed out information for readers without web access, although they may find it more satisfactory to follow up their interest through their local library's web access.

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### Lightning Conductors

Existing (pre-2008) installations on tall buildings do not need to be upgraded with a Faraday Cage system to comply with new regulations, but any replacement would need to do so. Ecclesiastical Insurance recommends that lightning conductors should be properly maintained and tested at least every 4 years:

[www.ecclesiastical.com/ChurchMatters/Images/lightning-protection-guidance-notes.pdf](http://www.ecclesiastical.com/ChurchMatters/Images/lightning-protection-guidance-notes.pdf)

### Fire Risk Assessment

Churches are reminded of the need to assess the fire risks in their public buildings, put in place systems (such as fire fighting equipment, training, good housekeeping and evacuation procedures) to manage those risks, and to review the assessment and systems periodically. It is a good idea to keep a written record.

The Government has issued brief and detailed guides to this requirement:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/14879/making-your-premises-safe-short-guide.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/14879/making-your-premises-safe-short-guide.pdf)

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/14888/fsra-small-medium-assembly.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/14888/fsra-small-medium-assembly.pdf)

## **Fire Fighting Equipment**

Fire extinguishers and other equipment should be maintained and professionally tested annually.

## **Fire Alarms**

Churches with particularly valuable buildings may wish to consider installing a remotely-monitored fire alarm. This would ensure that the monitoring company alerted either church officers or the fire brigade if a fire was detected, so saving historic fabric. Your insurer may be able to advise you on a suitable system.

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