

PROCEDURES

Survey If your Church wishes to seek a grant towards surveys of its properties then obtain the necessary number of survey forms from the Resources Officer or download them from the Synod web site. Obtain quotes and instruct a surveyor. Send the report(s) and surveyors invoice to the Property Officer and ask for a grant.

Maintenance works Obtain Synod Grant and Loan application forms from the Finance Officer and seek fixed price quotations. If your Church can afford 50% of the costs then obtain Church Meeting approval and return the completed forms and other documentation to the Finance Officer. Following the satisfactory resolution of any queries and the approval of the Synod Resources Committee your Church will be notified that your project may proceed. Your surveyor should advise about any need for local authority or listed building approvals. The Procedure for Control of Works to Listed Buildings explains how approval now has to be obtained from the URC and the necessary forms are available from the Synod Office. You will need to allow up to six months for Listed Buildings procedures.

The grant will then be paid to the Church at the time when contractors' accounts are due for payment.

THEREAFTER

Maintenance works Although your church buildings will now be free of the need for major maintenance over the next five years it is essential that a regular programme of routine care is established. In our climate, water is the cause of almost all uninsurable property damage. Any hint of damp inside or outside your buildings, discolouration of plaster, damp patches, nasty smells, green algae on outside walls, must be immediately investigated and the cause rapidly eliminated. The small expenditure incurred in annually clearing gutters, down pipes, gullies etc and checking plumbing is a very wise investment.

Mission Released from worries about maintenance of the buildings, your Church is now free to pursue once more its God given mission to the community.

Future In five years time please undertake another Project Facelift survey.

January 2010



PROPERTY MAINTENANCE can be a growing burden for many churches. This is particularly so for those churches which do not have within their membership any skilled or available people to manage or undertake the routine care which prevents the development of major structural problems.

PROJECT FACELIFT was established by the Synod in 1990 to encourage churches to obtain periodic property survey reports and to act upon the surveyor's recommendations. (This is good practice) Limited funding is provided from the Church Life and Mission fund income which enables the Synod to offer two types of grant.

1. A grant of 50% of the cost of a full survey, up to a maximum grant of £300, is available upon presentation of a professional survey report, to the Property Officer. The report shall cover all of the properties of the Church and shall be in the format of the Synod Building Report Form.
2. A grant of up to 50% of the cost of the works identified in the survey report(s), up to a maximum grant of £12,000, is payable on completion of the works. The cost of the works including professional fees and VAT may attract this grant.

To Qualify a Church will also need to provide a clear Mission Statement aligned to The Five Marks of Mission and a good record of meeting Ministry and Mission requirements and playing its part in the life of the wider church.

UNITED CHURCHES may use this scheme but will only receive the appropriate proportion of the 50% grants, e.g. a URC united with one other denomination will receive 25%, with two denominations, 16.7% etc.

More Information is available from the Resources Officer at the Synod Office. Phone 01223 830770
e-mail – eastern.resources@urc.org.uk
or check the web site www.urc-eastern.org.uk

SURVEY CONDITIONS

Surveyor It is desirable that the survey be undertaken by a professional buildings surveyor with appropriate experience and the necessary indemnity insurance. In special circumstances the Field Property Officer may agree that an experienced volunteer without formal qualifications or indemnity insurance may undertake the survey. The surveyor shall be independent of the particular church and not involved in any "new work". A fixed price quotation to cover the survey of all church properties including any manse, is desired from a number of surveyors. The quote shall include all out of pocket expenses and VAT.

Preparation You need to supply basic information about your buildings before passing the Building Report Forms to your chosen surveyor. Ready access to all roof spaces must be provided and you may need to supply, borrow or hire any necessary long ladders, unless the chosen surveyor can provide them.

MAINTENANCE CONDITIONS

Scope All maintenance work identified in the report(s) must be undertaken, preferably at one time and commenced within a year of the date of the Survey. This work must be sufficient to put the buildings into such a state of repair that they will need no further significant maintenance for a period of at least five years. (Any requests to the Synod for other property maintenance grants during the next five years are unlikely to receive a sympathetic response). At least two quotations must be obtained for all works including VAT and professional fees. Projects costing less than £1,000 or more than £50,000 are not normally within the scope of Project Facelift.

Improvement works Although the scheme is not primarily intended for "new work" it is recognised that a refurbishment programme could involve the provision, replacement or rebuilding of facilities such as kitchen or toilets. Alterations to listed buildings require separate approval.

Loans. Unless the project cost exceeds £24,000 Synod loans cannot be offered for Project Facelift works. If project costs exceed £120,000 then the usual Synod grant facilities may be more beneficial.

RELAXATION OF CONDITIONS Project Facelift is a very generous response by the Synod especially to the property needs of smaller churches and accordingly it is only in very special circumstances that any of the above conditions will be relaxed.