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You might want to put together a plan to protect your congregation and your church building in case of an emergency.

We can help you think ahead.

Download our guidance

- [Disaster management plans for churches \(97.65 KB\)](#)



Why do you need a plan?

You need to protect your building from things like:

- Fire
- Lightning (which may spark a fire)
- Explosions
- Storms
- Floods
- Vandalism and theft

A disaster management plan will help you to:

- Assess and address the likely types and triggers of disasters
- Set out evacuation and safety procedures
- Prioritise items for protection
- Set out procedures for salvage, storage, business continuity, repair, and post-disaster restoration and review

What is a disaster management plan?

A DMP has three sections.

It aims to protect your building, including the interior fixtures and fittings that are integral to its design and function.

Risk assessment

Risk assessments include provision for staff and contractors to receive appropriate and adequate induction and on-going training to minimise risk.

It contains:

- Name of the church
- Date of completion and updates
- Specific risks and their severity (low, medium, high)
- Actions and measures to minimise the risks
- Future actions (include training)

Find out more about risk assessments

Emergency plan

An emergency plan should include close co-ordination and cooperation with the police, fire brigade and other agencies. It should also include appropriate measures for dealing with the media.

Its operation will help make sure that, in the event of a disaster, everyone is prepared and can respond in the most effective ways.

It contains:

- Name of church
- Date of completion and updates
- Staff to be called in the event of an emergency
- What to do in the event of an emergency
- Location of emergency equipment
- List of people and organisations who have copies of the plan

Find out more about disaster management plans

Recovery plan

A recovery plan makes sure that critical activities can continue. And it establishes the priorities for repair and salvage.

It contains:

- Name of the church
- Date of completion and updates
- Staff to be called in the aftermath of a disaster
- Salvage priority list (A, B, or C)
- Disaster recovery procedures
- Follow-up assessment

Case studies

- [Bath Abbey Emergency Reaction Team Plan](#) (41.47 KB)
- [St Peter Monkwearmouth DMP](#) (470.63 KB)
- [St Paul Jarrow DMP](#) (1.69 MB)

Who can help?

To produce a disaster management plan, get help from:

- Your architect
- Your [diocese](#)
- Your [insurer](#)
- Your [quinquennial inspection report](#)
- Your church inventory

Consult widely, including:

- Historic England
- Local authorities
- Police
- Fire brigade (e.g. fire risk assessment)
- Local NHS trusts
- National Trust and Historic Royal Palaces (they have experience of the consequence of many sorts of disasters)

Our top tips

1. Make sure that your building and its contents are insured
2. Your insurers must be notified as early as possible if a disaster occurs; they will have expert advice and support
3. Detection and alarm systems and fire and flood protection systems need to be kept serviced and up-to-date
4. In the event of a disaster, STOP and wait for considered professional advice. Significant and costly damage can be caused by hasty decisions
5. Provide a single point of contact with the media, and inform your Diocesan Communications Officer as soon as possible in the event of a disaster
6. Early protection is invaluable. Knowing sympathetic local builders who can cover a roof swiftly can prevent costly damage.
7. Once the immediate emergency is passed – take control of events. Do not let them control you. If your DMP is solid and up-to-date, this will be much easier

Want more help?

Heritage and climate change

[Understand the risks of flooding and extreme weather on your church](#)

Reducing risk for World Heritage

[Prevent loss from natural and man-triggered catastrophic events](#)

Risk management

[Get more advice from Ecclesiastical Insurance](#)

Insurance, health and safety

[Be prepared](#)

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