

E BUILDING WORKS 4 Dangerous Buildings & Emergency Procedures

(PRN 231)

1 The PLATO document states - potential dangers will normally have been noticed during the regular surveys a church should be commissioning. From time to time however, dangers emerge without warning, and the document outlines the action to be taken should such an eventuality occur. It deals with immediate action and action to be taken within 24 hours and liaison with the emergency services.

2 AS SOON AS THE DANGER IS NOTICED (SYN)

- (a) Dial 999 and ask for the Fire Brigade. They will advise you to send someone to the site and alert the Police and Local Authority - Dangerous Buildings Officer.
- (b) Cordon off the area.
- (c) Await instructions from the emergency services. When these are received, ensure everyone involved knows the situation.
- (d) Inform your Insurance Company. They will be aware of their public liability and will handle the situation professionally, involving loss adjusters, structural engineers, scaffolders, demolition teams as necessary.
- (e) Inform the following – Area Secretary, Synod Property Consultant, the Trustees and, if the building is listed or in a Conservation Area, the Synod LBAC.
- (f) Appoint your own professional representative to liaise with Insurance Company. Such a representative should be a Quantity Surveyor, Architect or Structural Engineer who is fully qualified with the appropriate indemnity insurance. S/he will have the benefit of expertise to present the case for the church to the insurers with the best effect.

SPECIAL NOTES

3 In such situations the emergency services will act, by way of arranging demolition, shoring up, fence protection or dealing with fire. Costs will normally follow the event. Close liaison with the Insurance Company is essential. It is important to have clear indications that responsibility for actions taken, and the resultant claims or costs, rest with the church, which is the initiating authority.

4 Maintain contact with the District Council, Synod and Trustees throughout, both in the early stages and when decisions about rebuilding are being considered.