

Roofing

What Can Go Wrong?

Without basic maintenance, many small problems with roofs can be missed which will evolve into much larger problems. Slipped tiles can fall off and break, which can create space for water to penetrate. Hip and ridge tiles at the junction of roofs can become loose from the mortar and can also allow water to penetrate into the building. Lead flashings can also deteriorate and leave holes that can allow water penetration. Excess vegetation such as moss can exacerbate these problems and accelerate the decay of a roof.

There is one theme you may have picked up on here, anywhere a roof can be faulty will lead to water penetrating the building. This can lead to rot taking hold in roof timbers, and damp seeping into the walls causing plaster to flack and fall off. In essence, take good care of your roof and you will also be taking good care of your church's interior.

Remember, **faulty roofs cause damp**, and a **damp** church is a **cold** church!

How should a slate or tile roof be maintained?

As an Appointed Fabric Officer, Church Warden or PCC member, the most important thing you can do is check the roofs for slipped or broken tiles and faulty pointing on the roof junctions once a month during a church walkaround. To reinstate tiles requires working from height and should only be undertaken by a **competent and qualified professional**, the same goes for any repointing work.

If you see any faults in the roof, rectify them immediately by hiring an appropriate contractor to refit or repoint roof tiles. If you allow defects to go unrectified, you may eventually have to replace an entire roof slope. While a competent contractor will know this, it is important you do too, when repointing a roof junction, it is important the repointing is done with a lime mortar so the roof can breathe and not allow damp to build within the roof.

Moss should also be removed from the roof regularly so it doesn't retain moisture and cause damp. Whilst this is relatively simple it does require working from height, which should only be undertaken by a **competent and qualified professional**. Perhaps this can be done when the gutters

are cleaned out so that two maintenance tasks can be accomplished at once and potentially save on maintenance costs.

How should a metal roof and metal flashings be maintained?

Alongside slate, lead roofs are also common on churches, even more common are lead flashings that you will normally find on slate roofs as well as lead ones. Lead roofs can develop holes over time that can allow water to penetrate into the church. What you can do as a member of your PCC is the same as for a slate roof, monitor the roof from the ground and look out for defects.

Repairing holes and splits is normally done by welding lead patches, not by soldering. You should seek out an accredited contractor to carry out this work, and should not undertake it yourself.

Maintenance work of this variety is a grey area in terms of faculties, it is safest to assign it to **List B** and **consult with the DAC secretary** on lead roof maintenance.