



THE CHURCHES CONSERVATION TRUST

CHURCH CLEANING GUIDELINES





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WE Hugely appreciate any help that local people can give, and cleaning our churches is a very important part of looking after these wonderful historic buildings.

WE hope that as supporters clean they will discover more about the interesting fixtures and fittings inside each of the Trust churches, and so their vulnerabilities. Regular care and cleaning helps to identify problems before they become serious.

WE rely on volunteers to help us achieve and maintain high standards of presentation and conservation.

THIS booklet provides guidance on basic house-keeping and cleaning of our churches and how to use the cleaning materials supplied by the Trust.



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GENERAL

WHEN CLEANING A CHURCH IT IS BEST TO PUT ASIDE YOUR USUAL STANDARDS FOR CLEANING YOUR HOUSE! IT CAN SEEM A BIT OF AN UPHILL STRUGGLE AT TIMES, WITH CHURCHES SEEMING TO HAVE MIRACULOUS POWERS TO BECOME DIRTY AGAIN WITHIN HOURS!

OUR MAIN AIM IS TO MAKE OUR CHURCHES LOOK WELCOMING AND WELL-LOVED HISTORIC BUILDINGS, RATHER THAN MAKING THEM GLEAM. CLEANING DEFINITELY SHOULDN'T BE USED TO ALTER OR IMPROVE UPON THE FABRIC ITSELF - WE HAVE A PROFESSIONAL CONSERVATION TEAM WHO ENSURE THAT EACH CHURCH IS CAREFULLY MAINTAINED, REPAIRED AND CONSERVED.

IF IN DOUBT ABOUT WHAT MATERIALS AND METHODS TO USE, AND BEFORE CLEANING ANYTHING YOU HAVEN'T CLEANED BEFORE — ASK YOUR CCT CONTACT. OUR CONSERVATION MANAGERS WILL BE VERY HAPPY TO MEET YOU AND DISCUSS ANY CONCERNS YOU MIGHT HAVE.

MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT

YOUR CCT CONTACT WILL PROVIDE YOU WITH ANY MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT YOU REQUIRE FOR THE CLEANING OF THE CHURCH OR MAINTENANCE OF THE GROUNDS. PLEASE NOTIFY THEM WHEN SUPPLIES ARE RUNNING LOW AND THEY WILL EITHER PROVIDE YOU WITH FURTHER MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT DIRECTLY OR ASK YOU TO PURCHASE IT AND SUPPLY A RECEIPT FOR CLAIMING EXPENSES.

THE LIST OF BASIC CLEANING MATERIALS AT THE END OF THIS BOOKLET IS INTENDED TO HELP AND GUIDE OUR SUPPORTERS WITH THIS IMPORTANT WORK.

BEFORE UNDERTAKING TAKING ANY CLEANING REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING:

Do

- CLEAN GENTLY AND SYMPATHETICALLY, BEARING IN MIND THE AGE AND FRAGILITY OF THE OBJECT.
- KEEP CLEANING EQUIPMENT FOR ITS STATED PURPOSE, LABELLING BRUSHES CLEARLY.
- ASK FOR ADVICE AND HELP IF NECESSARY.

Do Not

- USE AGGRESSIVE CLEANING PRODUCTS AND HOUSEHOLD POLISHES: NO ABRASIVES, SILICONE POLISHES, AEROSOL POLISHES OR FURNITURE CREAM.
- ALLOW CLEANING MATERIALS TO SPREAD ONTO ADJOINING SURFACES.



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TIMBER FURNISHINGS AND FITTINGS

- DUST TIMBERS AND JOINERY LIGHTLY AND GENTLY WITH A LINT-FREE CLOTH OR FINE BRUSH.
- OCCASIONALLY AND NOT MORE THAN ONCE EVERY FEW YEARS, CONSIDER APPLYING A LIGHT COAT OF BEESWAX WITH TURPENTINE TO SURFACES WHICH HAVE BEEN WAXED BEFORE, BUT NOT TO DRY, UNFINISHED WOODWORK
- DO NOT APPLY WAX TO A SURFACE WHICH HAS NOT BEEN WAXED BEFORE; LEAVE IT AS DRY, UNFINISHED WOODWORK.
- DO **NOT** USE SPRAY POLISHES, OR ANY KIND OF SILICONE OR CHEMICAL POLISH, OR ANY SOLVENTS. THESE WILL DO MORE HARM THAN GOOD.
- DO **NOT** USE OILS OF ANY KIND.
- DO **NOT** STRIP THE SURFACE FINISH OR USE ABRASIVES OF ANY KIND.

TIMBER FLOORBOARDS

- DRY POLISH POLISHED FLOORS OCCASIONALLY, ENSURING THAT POLISHING BRUSHES DO NOT BECOME IMPREGNATED WITH POLISH.
- USE A WOOLLEN CLOTH IMPREGNATED WITH A 50/50 MIXTURE OF PARAFFIN AND VINEGAR WRAPPED ROUND A MOP TO COLLECT DUST AND LEAVE THE FLOOR SHINY.
- USE A CLEAN CLOTH EACH TIME THE FLOOR IS CLEANED.
- CAREFULLY DISPOSE OF USED CLOTHS AS THEY CONSTITUTE A FIRE RISK.
- MOP UNPOLISHED WOOD VERY OCCASIONALLY USING A DAMP MOP RINSED IN CLEAR WATER AND DRIED OFF WITH A DRY MOP.

NOTE: PARAFFIN CAN BE BOUGHT FROM YOUR LOCAL DIY SHOP – IT CANNOT BE BOUGHT ON-LINE.



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CERAMICS – FLOOR, WALL-TILES & MOSAICS

- MEDIEVAL ENCAUSTIC FLOOR TILES CAN BE CAREFULLY BRUSHED WITH A SOFT BRUSH. THEY SHOULD **NEVER** BE CLEANED USING WATER OR EVEN A DAMP CLOTH BUT CLEANED BY A CONSERVATOR.
- PLAIN FLOOR AND WALL TILES AND MOSAICS CAN BE LIGHTLY WIPED WITH A DAMP CLOTH USING DE-IONIZED WATER.
- GLAZED BRICKS AND TILES CAN BE WASHED WITH A MOP AND WATER TO WHICH A SMALL AMOUNT OF DETERGENT E.G. VULPEX LIQUID SOAP, HAS BEEN ADDED. WASH OFF WITH CLEAN WATER AND POLISH WITH A SOFT CLOTH.
- LOOSE DIRT AND DUST CAN BE REMOVED FROM FAIR-FACE BRICKWORK WITH A DRY BRISTLE BRUSH; USING WATER WILL ONLY SPREAD THE PROBLEM.
- PREVENTATIVE MEASURES FOR PROTECTING FLOORS OF ALL TYPES.

PLACE MATTING OVER FLOORS FOR EVENTS

- PUT A COCONUT *COIRE* MAT INSIDE ENTRANCES (SECURED)
- PLACE PIECES OF THICK CARDBOARD OR CARPET UNDER HEAVY FURNITURE
- DO NOT DRAG FURNITURE OVER FLOORS
- KEEP DUST AND DIRT AT A MINIMUM BY REGULAR VACUUMING AND SWEEPING/DUSTING
- KEEP PAINT AND SOLVENTS AWAY FROM FLOORS
- REFER TO CCT CANDLES POLICY TO AVOID WAX DRIPPING ON FLOORS
- **No** HIGH HEELS



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METALS

BRASS

- DUST LIGHTLY ONCE OR TWICE A YEAR AND CAREFULLY REMOVE DUST TRAPPED IN TOOLING AND CREVICES WITH A SOFT BRISTLE BRUSH.
- BRASS POLISHES SHOULD **NOT** BE USE TO SHINE BRASS AS THEY CAN BE ABRASIVE.
- IF YOU NOTICE ANY LOOSE FIXINGS PLEASE INFORM YOUR TRUST CONTACT.

BRONZE

- DUST LIGHTLY ONCE OR TWICE A YEAR AND CAREFULLY REMOVE DUST TRAPPED IN TOOLING AND CREVICES WITH A SOFT BRISTLE BRUSH.
- BRONZE DOES NOT NEED TO BE POLISHED OR WASHED.

ALUMINIUM

- CLEAN WITH WARM SOAPY WATER APPLIED WITH A CLOTH OR LEATHER AND DRIED AND POLISHED WITH A SOFT DRY CLOTH.





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STONE

- CLEAN MARBLE OR SIMILAR STONE SURFACES WITH DE-IONIZED WATER ONLY. THE ACIDITY IN TAP WATER WILL DAMAGE STONE.
- FLOORING STONE, MARBLE, AND TERRAZZO FLOORS SHOULD BE MOPPED VERY OCCASIONALLY WITH A DAMP MOP RINSED IN CLEAR WATER AND DRIED OFF WITH A DRY MOP.
- DUST MEMORIALS AND MONUMENTS GENTLY USING A SOFT BRUSH.
- GENTLY DUST ALABASTER FEATURES WITH A SOFT BRUSH. IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT ALABASTER IS NEVER CLEANED WITH WATER. ALABASTER IS SOLUBLE IN WATER SO CLEANING WITH WATER WILL DISSOLVE IT.
- MONITORING: MOST IMPORTANTLY – KEEP AN EYE ON STONEMASONRY FOR SIGNS OF DEGRADATION AND INFORM YOUR CCT CONTACT IF YOU HAVE ANY CONCERNS.



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GLASS

PLAIN GLASS

- GENTLE DUST USING A COBWEB BRUSH /DUSTER.
- FOLLOWING DUSTING, PLAIN GLASS CAN BE WASHED GENTLY WITH CLEAN WATER (PREFERABLY DE-IONISED).
- FOR THIS USE A SOFT CLEAN CLOTH. DRY AND THEN POLISH WITH CHAMOIS LEATHER.
- THE USE OF PROPRIETARY WINDOW CLEANERS IS **NOT** ADVISED AS THEY LEAVE POWDER TRACES ALONG EDGES AND CORNERS AND THEIR ALKALINITY CAN CAUSE CHEMICAL DAMAGE.

PLAIN LEADED LIGHTS

- THESE SHOULD **NOT** BE WASHED BUT JUST DUSTED VERY GENTLY AS THE LEAD CAN OFTEN BE FRAGILE.

STAINED GLASS

- LIGHTLY DUST STAINED GLASS WITH A SOFT BRUSH.
- DUE TO THE FRAGILITY OF THE MATERIAL STAINED GLASS REQUIRES SPECIALIST CARE. THIS SHOULD BE UNDERTAKEN BY A SUITABLY QUALIFIED PROFESSIONAL ONLY. DO NOT WASH WITH WATER.





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PAINTED SURFACES

PAINTED WOOD

- BEFORE CLEANING PAINTWORK E.G. PAINTED PEWS, WINDOW FRAMES, TEST A SMALL AREA TO ENSURE THAT THE PAINT SURFACE IS NOT REMOVED BY THE CLEANING METHOD.
- PROPRIETARY CLEANERS OR ABRASIVE POWDERS SHOULD **NOT** BE USED AS THEY WILL DAMAGE AND ABRASE THE SURFACE.
- EVEN DUSTING CAN CAUSE ABRASION OF A PAINTED SURFACE SO IT IS IMPORTANT TO UNDERTAKE CLEANING ONLY WHEN REALLY NEEDED.
- GENERAL PAINT CAN BE CLEANED WITH WATER TO WHICH A SMALL AMOUNT OF DETERGENT HAS BEEN ADDED.

WALLS

LIMEWASH

- WALLS SHOULD BE GENTLY SWEEPED WITH SOFT BROOM OR COBWEB BRUSH. IN SOME CHURCHES YOU WILL BE ASKED NOT TO CLEAN THE WALLS – THIS IS BECAUSE THERE MAY BE FRAGILE WALL PAINTINGS UNDERNEATH AND/OR WE HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO UNDERTAKE URGENT STABILIZATION WORK. WE WILL ADVISE YOU OF OUR PLANS FOR SUCH WORK.

WALL PAINTINGS (MURALS)

- SHOULD ONLY BE CLEANED BY AN APPROPRIATELY QUALIFIED PROFESSIONAL.

PAINTINGS ON CANVAS OR WOOD

- E.G. REREDOS, HATCHMENTS
- DUST SURFACES GENTLY WITH A SOFT BRUSH (IF THERE IS NO FLAKING), OTHERWISE PAINTING SHOULD ONLY BE CLEANED BY A SPECIALIST CONSERVATOR.



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TEXTILES

VESTMENTS, ALTAR CLOTHS

- TEXTILES OF HISTORIC INTEREST SHOULD BE CLEANED BY AN APPROPRIATELY QUALIFIED SPECIALIST; THEY SHOULD NOT BE WASHED OR DRY-CLEANED. THIS ALSO APPLIES TO TEXTILES THAT ARE FRAGILE, HAVE BEADS, LOOSE FRINGES ETC.

SOFT FURNISHING/UPHOLSTERY/LEATHER

- VACUUM TEXTILES AT LOW POWER AND COVER THE NOZZLE WITH A NYLON GAUZE SCREEN (FOR EXAMPLE, A PAIR OF TIGHTS).
- DO **NOT** PRESS DOWN ONTO THE TEXTILE WITH THE VACUUM HEAD AS THIS CAN CAUSE DAMAGE.
- TAKE CARE WHEN DUSTING FURNITURE THAT THE DUSTER DOES NOT COME INTO CONTACT WITH ANY TEXTILES UPHOLSTERY.
- UPHOLSTERY CAN BE GENTLY PATTED WITH A PLASTIC FLY SWAT TO LOOSEN DIRT BEFORE VACUUMING.

CARPETS AND RUGS

- SHOULD BE VACUUMED FREQUENTLY TO PREVENT DAMAGE FROM DUST AND DIRT.

LEATHER

- LEATHER REQUIRES SPECIALIST TREATMENT, THEREFORE ONLY A GENERAL DUSTING WITH A SMALL DUSTING BRUSH IS APPROPRIATE/ NEEDED.





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CANDLE WAX

IF FURNISHINGS/FABRICS REQUIRE REMOVAL OF CANDLE-WAX, PLEASE INFORM YOUR TRUST CONTACT WHO WILL LIAISE WITH OUR CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT.



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A BASIC CLEANING PACK SHOULD CONTAIN:

- LARGE SOFT BRUSH (DUSTING) – TO BE ABLE TO COVER WIDER AREA
- SMALL SOFT BRUSH (DUSTING) – FOR CARVINGS, BOOKS AND CREVICES
- MOP WITH INTERCHANGEABLE WET (FOR WIPING) AND DRY (FOR DUSTING) HEADS
- LINT-FREE COTTON GLOVES – FOR HANDLING ITEMS LIKE CANDLESTICKS OR OLD BIBLES ETC
- DUST MASKS – TO BE WORN WHEN A CHURCH IS NOT CLEANED REGULARLY AND MAY BE PARTICULARLY DUSTY
- LINT-FREE CLOTHS (TO REPLACE NORMAL HAND DUSTERS) – MUST BE VENTILATED IF IMPREGNATED WITH WAX– TO BE LAUNDERED AFTER HEAVY USE
- COBWEB BRUSH WITH EXTENDABLE HANDLE (UP TO 12FT)
- SOFT BROOM
- NYLON SCREEN FOR VACUUM – (1 PAIR OF NYLON POP SOCKS) – IN CASE THERE ARE BROKEN FRAGMENTS ETC.
- UNSTAINED BEESWAX POLISH – MUST BE VENTILATED
- DE-IONISED WATER - IS TREATED WATER TO STOP CORROSION ON ALL SURFACES – TAP WATER IS ACIDIC ENOUGH TO CAUSE DAMAGE
- COTTON SWABS – CAN USE WITH DE-IONISED WATER FOR CLEANING CREVICES (FOR EXAMPLE)
- LIQUID VULPEX SOAP – FOR NORMAL AQUEOUS CLEANING, ONE PART VULPEX TO SIX OR SEVEN PARTS COLD TAP WATER (BY VOLUME)
- LATEX GLOVES TO PROTECT YOUR SKIN
- SPONGE RING TO FIT OVER THE END OF THE VACUUM – PREVENTS THE METAL EDGE OF THE NOZZLE FROM SCRATCHING FRAGILE SURFACES
- DUST PAN AND BRUSH



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SPECIALIST EXTRAS

- THERE ARE SOME JOBS THAT MAY REQUIRE ADDITIONAL PRODUCTS OR EQUIPMENT. IF AT ANY TIME YOU FEEL YOU NEED THESE, PLEASE INFORM YOUR TRUST CONTACT.
- 50/50 MIXTURE OF PARAFFIN AND VINEGAR – FOR CLEANING POLISHED FLOORBOARDS
- BLOTting PAPER FOR LIFTING LIQUID SPILLS ON LEATHER (FOR EXAMPLE)
- 50/50 WHITE SPIRIT/WATER WITH 2-3 DROPS OF CONSERVATION DETERGENT (VULPEX) – REMOVE ANY RESIDUE WITH IT, BUT SOFT ENOUGH NOT TO DAMAGE HISTORIC FINISHES

PROCUREMENT DETAILS

- WE CAN PURCHASE ALL CLEANING ITEMS FOR YOU; HOWEVER, SOME BASIC CLEANING MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE FROM YOUR LOCAL DIY OR HARDWARE SHOP.
- PLEASE INFORM YOUR LOCAL TRUST CONTACT IF YOU NEED ADDITIONAL CLEANING SUPPLIES FROM US.

STORAGE AND USE OF MATERIALS

- COBWEB BRUSH, MOP HANDLES & BUCKETS AND SOFT BROOM SHOULD BE STORED IN VESTRY OR THE BASE OF THE TOWER
- CLOTHS USED FOR BEESWAX CAN TO BE WASHED, ESPECIALLY AFTER HEAVY USE, BUT MUST BE KEPT IN A VENTILATED AREA AT ALL TIMES
- WE SUGGEST THAT CLEANING BAGS WITH MATERIALS BE KEPT IN A LOCKED VESTRY OR SOMEWHERE OUT OF THE WAY IN THE CHURCH – YOUR TRUST CONTACT CAN ADVISE.
- FLAMMABLE MATERIALS (E.G. TINS OF BEESWAX, PARAFFIN, WHITE SPIRIT) MUST BE KEPT IN A LOCKED CONTAINER; THIS WILL BE PROVIDED BY THE TRUST



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USEFUL LINKS

- [HTTP://WWW.BUILDINGCONSERVATION.COM/](http://www.buildingconservation.com/) THIS IS THE CATHEDRAL COMMUNICATIONS' WEBSITE WHICH GIVES SPECIALIST INFORMATION FOR THE CONSERVATION AND REPAIR OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND THEIR SURROUNDINGS
- [HTTP://WWW.SPAB.ORG.UK/](http://www.spab.org.uk/) THE WEBSITE OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF ANCIENT BUILDINGS – IT HAS A USEFUL Q&A SECTION ON COMMON PROBLEMS FOR OLD BUILDINGS [HTTP://WWW.SPAB.ORG.UK/HTML/ADVICE/TECHNICAL-QAS/](http://www.spab.org.uk/html/advice/technical-qas/)
- [HTTP://WWW.MAINTAINYOURBUILDING.ORG.UK/](http://www.maintainyourbuilding.org.uk/) THIS IS SPAB'S WEBSITE ON HOW TO LOOK AFTER OLD BUILDINGS AND AVOID COSTLY REPAIR PROJECTS. IT PROVIDES ADVICE AND GUIDANCE ON EVERYTHING FROM ROOFS TO DRAINS.
- [HTTP://SPABFIM.ORG.UK](http://spabfim.org.uk) FAITH IN MAINTENANCE IS A UNIQUE PROJECT THAT AIMS TO PROVIDE TRAINING AND SUPPORT FOR THE THOUSANDS OF VOLUNTEERS IN ENGLAND AND WALES WHO HELP TO MAINTAIN OUR HISTORIC PLACES OF WORSHIP.
- FAITH IN MAINTENANCE WILL PROVIDE 30 TRAINING COURSES EACH YEAR HELPING OVER 6,000 VOLUNTEERS TO LOOK AFTER A VARIETY OF FAITH BUILDINGS ACROSS THE COUNTRY. ONE OF THE KEY ASPECTS OF THE SCHEME IS THAT THE TRAINING COURSES ARE FREE AND ARE AVAILABLE TO ANY FAITH GROUP USING AN HISTORIC BUILDING FOR ITS WORSHIP.
- FAITH IN MAINTENANCE IS SUPPORTED BY THE HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND, ENGLISH HERITAGE AND THE COUNCIL FOR THE CARE OF CHURCHES.
- [HTTP://WWW.CHURCHCARE.CO.UK/](http://www.churchcare.co.uk/) IS A 'ONE-STOP SHOP' FOR ANYONE INVOLVED IN THE RUNNING OF A CHURCH. CHURCH CARE IS PRODUCED BY THE ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL, SERVING THE PARISHES OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.
- [HTTP://WWW.CONSERVATION-BY-DESIGN.CO.UK](http://www.conservation-by-design.co.uk) CONSERVATION BY DESIGN IS A COMPANY DEDICATED TO THE DESIGN AND SUPPLY OF HIGH QUALITY CONSERVATION STORAGE AND DISPLAY PRODUCTS ALL GROUPED TOGETHER UNDER THE BANNER OF THE TIMECARE COLLECTION.
- [HTTP://WWW.CONSERVATIONREGISTER.COM/CARING.ASP](http://www.conservationregister.com/caring.asp) IS THE WEBSITE OF THE INSTITUTE OF CONSERVATION WHICH GIVES GUIDANCE ON CARING FOR A RANGE OF HERITAGE OBJECTS AND MATERIALS AND GIVES EXAMPLES OF THE TYPES OF DETERIORATION AND PROBLEMS THAT SHOULD BE REFERRED TO A PROFESSIONAL CONSERVATOR OR, IN THE CASE OF THE CCT, TO YOUR CCT CONTACT.

SUGGESTED BOOKS

- 'THE NATIONAL TRUST MANUAL OF HOUSEKEEPING' IS PUBLISHED BY ELSEVIER AND CAN BE OBTAINED VIA MOST GOOD ON-LINE BOOKSHOPS. IT IS AN EXPENSIVE VOLUME BUT YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY SHOULD BE ABLE TO ORDER IN A COPY.