

**LIGHTNING CONDUCTOR TESTING – BRIDGNORTH BENEFICE GROUP ARRANGEMENT**

Regular lightning conductor testing is a requirement on every church equipped with a conductor. The church's insurance surveyor will normally ask to see the latest test certificate when an insurance survey is carried out. In addition the church architect will check if a lightning conductor test has been carried out when a quinquennial survey is undertaken. The benefice wide arrangement provides an economical solution for Bridgnorth PCCs.

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**PCC ACTION**

- Ensure Church Warden(s) see this guideline
- PCCs need to decide if they wish to utilise the Bridgnorth Team contract for lightning conductor testing

**1. Why is testing required?**

Ecclesiastical states that the latest BS standard for inspections is BS EN 62305 which recommends that lightning protection systems should be inspected and tested at fixed intervals, with a maximum interval of four years; it may be convenient to reduce this to two to fit the quinquennial inspection cycle, with an annual visual inspection by a church officer. An inspection and test is also advisable following a strike or suspected strike as some damage may have occurred. Records of all inspections and tests should be maintained.

**2. What is involved in testing?**

A simple lightning conductor involves a terminal attached to the highest point of the church (eg vane on tower) with a conductor (eg copper strip) leading down the building to one or more rods set vertically underground. Testing involves:

- (a) Measuring the resistance of the conductor (which should not exceed 10 ohms). The test does not require access to the church. The reason for failing this test is usually that the rods underground are corroded or have been damaged by a lightning strike. The rods will normally last about 12 years unless there has been a strike which could cause the rod(s) to cease to act as a conductor.
- (b) Checking the condition of the terminal in the air and the condition of the conducting strip. This work may require access to the church tower.

**3. What is the Benefice Group Arrangement?**

As lightning conductor testing is a similar piece of work for each church in the benefice, the Team Council Costs and Best Practise considered that a group contract would enable a cost saving to be achieved whereby a contractor can undertake testing on a number of churches within the benefice on one visit. Following an exercise to compare rates of 4 qualified contractors (members of the Association of Technical and Lightning Access Specialists (ATLAS)) an arrangement has been made with Dawson Steeplejacks Ltd to undertake testing for the benefice. The arrangement provides for testing in compliance with the current BS standard on a single specified date which is communicated to the contact of each church in

advance. The contractor provides for the following to be supplied to the church warden and Treasurer of each church following the test:

- a) a certificate of the test completed to meet the current BS standard and the results
- b) a report with quotation to rectify any faults identified
- c) an invoice

#### **4. How often will the conductor be tested?**

Testing is planned to be carried out every 2 years. A church can leave the test for 4 years but some of the churches in the benefice are keen to have more frequent testing. An insurance surveyor has pointed out that a conductor that isn't working is more dangerous than no conductor at all.

The first test took place in August 2019 and therefore the next test will be in 2021. The date will be communicated to participating churches closer to the date.

#### **5. How much does it cost?**

The charge for 2019 was £60 plus VAT (£72). This must be paid by each Treasurer directly to Dawson Steeplejacks Ltd.

#### **6. How does a PCC join in this arrangement?**

To join the scheme a representative of a Bridgnorth PCC needs to complete the details on the Appendix to this guide and return as shown. This confirms that:

- the PCC wishes that the test is undertaken,
- confirms the proposed date for benefice testing is acceptable
- will pay the charge directly to the contractor as previously agreed
- handle all matters related to faults and rectification of these directly with the contractor

Those churches that confirmed they wished to participate in the 2019 were Bridgnorth St Mary's, Monkhopton, Morville, Tasley, Acton Round and Quatford. These churches will be automatically included in the next test meaning they will be advised of the 2021 test date and price prior to confirming they wish to proceed.

#### **7. What if my PCC wants to organise its own testing?**

There is no obligation for Bridgnorth PCCs to join the arrangement. It has been set up simply to benefit from lower charges for testing.

#### **8. Contacts**

For further information please contact Tim Morris [timothy.morris@btinternet.com](mailto:timothy.morris@btinternet.com) on behalf of the Team council Costs and Best Practice Group. To discuss local arrangements for testing or repair work please contact Dawsons Steeplejacks on 01934 876665 or email [dawson@dawsonsteeplejacks.co.uk](mailto:dawson@dawsonsteeplejacks.co.uk)

END

## APPENDIX

### ***PCC Acceptance Form for Lightning Conductor Testing***

The PCC of \_\_\_\_\_ wishes to participate/not participate (please delete as appropriate) in the Dawson lightning conductor testing contract. If you wish to participate please complete the details below:

**Name and address of your church** including post code \_\_\_\_\_

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**Details of the contact for your church** who will receive test results and a report of the test

Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_ Tel No. \_\_\_\_\_

Contact email address \_\_\_\_\_

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**Billing/Treasurer address for invoice** (include postal and email addresses please)

Billing Address including post code \_\_\_\_\_

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Email address for invoice \_\_\_\_\_

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#### **Declaration**

On behalf of \_\_\_\_\_ PCC I confirm that we wish to participate in the Dawson Steeplejacks Ltd contract for \_\_\_\_\_ and will remit the cost to the contractor on receipt of the test results and invoice.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_

Secretary/Treasurer/Church Warden (delete as appropriate) Date \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM to Tim Morris by scan and email to [timothy.morris@btinternet.com](mailto:timothy.morris@btinternet.com) or by post to Westholme, Underton, Bridgnorth WV16 6TY**