



Cleaning Guidelines

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Created by the Conservation Team



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1. Preventive conservation cleaning and why it's important

Cleaning is an important element of the maintenance and care for our historic churches. It supports the preventive conservation of a church and assists with preventing and mitigating the causes of deterioration to historic materials. Recording and managing cleaning within a church is integral to its sustainability.

Cleaning involves managing agents of deterioration such as dust and dirt, pests and moulds. It's important to use appropriate equipment for each type of material that you are caring for and aim to clean when it is required rather than as a matter of routine. By reviewing your church and identifying key objects or areas, you will be able to create a cleaning plan and log. This will inform when and what you need to carry out. It is incredibly useful to note any changes to an object within your church and build up a condition log.

These guidelines aim to provide you with information about equipment and techniques to support you with cleaning specific materials. The aim is to remove dust and dirt rather than an intervention to the fabric. If you believe an object or area of the church has deteriorated significantly, in the first instance, please seek further advice from your Local Community Officer.

2. **Cleaning when a church has bats**

Cleaning up after bats should focus on removing urine and droppings. Stains or scarring often requires more intervention with the historic fabric and such work should be carried out by, or, under the instruction of a Conservator.

All UK bats feed on insects. Their droppings are made up of the remains of insect exoskeletons and they contain no moisture and crumble to dust. Bats tend to excrete urine and droppings as they leave and enter both buildings and roosts. Deposits can be concentrated around these locations. However, depending on their flight patterns, bats may excrete all over and throughout the building. Droppings settle mainly on horizontal surfaces and are clearly visible; they are sometimes confused with mice droppings. Urine is more difficult to see, but fresh droplets will appear darker as the moisture is absorbed. In time these areas may turn lighter, as the moisture evaporates, leaving a bloom of salts. You may also be able to smell it.

It is important to regularly dust and vacuum up urine salts and droppings. The frequency depends on the amount of deposits. If you are undertaking a cleaning program for the first time, please contact your Local Community Officer who can provide initial guidance and support working with the Conservation Team. After an initial cleaning session, recording and mapping areas affected by droppings and urine, will help to inform the cleaning plan. This will aid identifying the frequency required for cleaning particular areas or objects.

3. Health and safety considerations

Your safety and your actions whilst cleaning are important considerations before beginning any cleaning. Depending on what type of cleaning and materials you may be using, will influence what precautions you should be taking to protect yourself and any possible visitors to your church. In section 4 where this guidance sets out cleaning techniques for each material, there is also equipment and product information in these guidelines. If you will be using equipment that has a lead, please consider closing the church to visitors or roping off the area you are working in to mitigate risks such as trips or slips. If you are using your own electrical equipment, complete a visual inspection to check that it is suitable for use. If the equipment is part of the church property, has a recent portable appliance test been completed or inspection been carried out? A visual dated sticker should be attached, if in doubt please contact the Local Community Officer.

Hopefully most of the cleaning will not involve lifting and moving too many objects so manual handling is kept to a minimum. If it is necessary, please ensure you carry out an assessment of your planned cleaning. This can be a conversation within the group about how you plan to move an object, where you plan to move it to and your access route i.e. is it free of other obstacles. Does the object have any vulnerable parts? Is the object empty of other contents? Always try to move furniture by its lowest load bearing parts. It is always useful to have someone act as the guider. Speak to us if you have any concerns. Cleaning is a great social activity, but if you are planning to carry out simple cleaning such as dusting the pews, consider taking a mobile phone or informing someone what you are planning to do.

Recommended protective equipment is set out in each material section, this is a precautionary measure to mitigate possible risks whilst cleaning. If there is no protective equipment stored at the church, please get in touch with your Local Community Officer.

If bird guano is discovered it's important to exercise caution with removal and cleaning, similar to bat droppings and urine, suitable PPE is required. Please notify your Local Community Officer if a large

discovery is made as there may be a maintenance issue to address. Please do not attempt to clean away large deposits prior to notifying the Local Community Officer.

In many cases, gloves will protect the materials you care for. Our hands carry natural oils and regular handling can increase soiling and deposits that accelerate the rate of deterioration.

Some object materials can cause harm such as lead based objects, painted surfaces that contain lead, barometers or mirrors that contain mercury. Within a church, there may be the presence of asbestos. Prior to cleaning, please contact us if you have any concerns. To be prepared, we recommend creating a cleaning plan and highlighting any objects or areas that should not be cleaned or require caution.

These guidelines focus on cleaning without working at height. If you believe it necessary to work at height, please contact us to discuss prior to cleaning.

Cleaning Guidelines

4.1 Timber

The following sections will deal with the most commonly found timber items within churches. For the purposes of this guidance, the items discussed are fittings, furnishings, or architectural items. Some examples of these are things such as:

Architectural	Fittings and furnishings
Floorboards	Pews
Panelling	Font covers
Staircases	Pulpits
Screens	Monuments



How?

Before any cleaning, it is important to examine the surface of items to identify any historic painted decoration, or areas of damage. If you find any damage, please report it to us in the first instance.

Timber fittings and furnishings

Generally, follow the principles set out below, when cleaning any smaller timber items

- Dust timbers with a lint free cloth or brush. In certain situations, a combination of a brush, vacuum, and cloth will be needed for complex or intricate shapes.
- Unless otherwise instructed please only use dry, or very slightly damp cloths to clean
- It is important to identify the finish of any object before applying any wax polish. Product should only be used with objects that have previous applications and do not have decorated surfaces (gilded or painted).
- Use wax polish sparingly, infrequently, and only when needed to ensure layers of wax are not built up. Using a chamois to buff existing wax finishes is an efficient method. Excess amounts of product attract dust and fibres and makes it harder to remove in the future.
- It is essential to ensure that the object is completely dry, as moisture trapped under the wax will create a bloom effect. Waxes should be applied with a clean cloth, or if the surface is intricate, use a brush to apply. Label the brush to identify that it has only to be used for this process. After a short period, the wax requires buffing off. Use another lint free cloth to do this, working in circular movements to buff the surface. Caution is required if the object has other materials attached, such as a metal fitting. Ensure wax is not deposited onto other materials.
- Spray polishes contain silicon and should not be used. They can cause damage to surfaces.
- If there are signs of insect damage or timber decay please take a photograph of the issue, and pass it on to the Local Community Officer. This information will be shared with the Conservation Team.

- If there are any broken or missing parts, please inform the Local Community Officer in the first instance. Store any detached parts in a labelled bag or box.

Architectural items

- Sweep floorboards with a soft broom or vacuum with a brush attachment.
- For wax polished floorboards or pews, re-application of wax polish should be infrequent. Using a chamois to buff areas is an effective method of cleaning rather than repeated application of wax polish.
- Wear suitable protective equipment. It is essential to ensure that the object is completely dry and has been dusted. Moisture trapped under the wax will create a bloom effect.
- Wax polishes should be applied with a clean cloth, or if the surface is intricate, use a brush to apply. Label the brush to identify that it has only to be used for this process. Work in one direction so that application is applied only once to a specific area and use product sparingly. Be careful not to push wax between floorboards. After a short period, the wax requires buffing off. Use another lint free cloth to do this, working in circular movements to buff the surface.
- Do not apply wax polish to any areas that have rugs or other items placed on top as this causes a slip hazard.
- Precaution is needed if the object also has other materials attached, such as a metal fitting. Care should be taken making sure wax is not deposited onto these other materials.
- Record any application of wax polish in a cleaning plan to inform others and prevent over cleaning. It is unlikely that applications would exceed more than once in a 12-month period.

- Try to avoid mopping, but if it is essential use an almost dry mop, rinsed in clear water and dried off with a dry mop.
- If there is a build-up of debris in the joints between floorboards, which will not come out through vacuuming, it can be carefully removed using a fine tool to ease out material.
- For items such as beams, a vacuum should be used with a soft brush attachment, but only following an inspection of the timbers to ensure that there is no painted decoration.
- A soft brush can mobilise dirt from carved details such as pew ends.
- If there is any sign of beetle infestation or rot, please take a photograph and contact us. Photographs should be taken to create a record to monitor the rate of decay.

Candle wax

Where wax has collected on the surface of any timber items, it is best practice to remove as much as possible from the item using a wooden spatula whilst taking great care not to damage the underlying timber. This may leave a residue, which is very difficult to remove and attempts should not be made to remove this.

Decorated surfaces

If an object has gilded decoration and this appears to be sound, use only a soft bristle brush such as goats or pony hair, to remove dust. If the surface has deteriorated, seek further advice. For other types of painted decoration, please do not attempt to clean as this requires a specialist accredited conservator. Pigments used may react to cleaning materials and the binders used are much weaker than those in modern paints are. Cleaning may cause the paint surface to be lost through brushing or vacuuming.

Water staining

Water stains are very difficult to remove and should be left. If there are significant water stains, please notify the Local Community Officer.

Cleaning with Bats in residence

- Wear nitrile gloves and wash hands after completing any cleaning. It is recommended masks be worn during cleaning as bat droppings can irritate the lungs.
- It is important to remove dropping and urine deposits when found to reduce possible deterioration to the surface of any timber especially when urine and droppings are found together.
- For droppings, use a sheet of paper or card, and place as close to the affected area. Using a brush carefully lift and move the droppings onto the surface and dispose.
- For urine, if discovered early the priority is to absorb as much of the liquid as possible. Use an absorbent cloth or heavy-duty paper towel and place over the urine to absorb as much as possible.
- If urine deposits have dried, remove the residue salts by brushing with a soft bristled brush.

Why?

- On occasion, dirt may need to be removed from floorboards. When cleaning, the introduction of water can cause further issues, therefore use sparingly, wringing the cloth or mop so that it is almost dry. Allow sufficient drying time for the floorboards afterwards.
- A trained conservator following a series of cleaning trials, should only do the removal of any staining from the surface of any object.
- It is not advisable to use any chemical/commercial cleaners as the chemicals they contain can damage surfaces causing loss of detail and further deterioration. Even household cleaning products are too harsh for historic materials especially those which are abrasive in nature.

- Do not attempt to redecorate any objects, as redecoration should not be undertaken without fully understanding the existing paintwork and any historic paint layers.

If you have any concerns about the condition of any timber items within your church, contact your Local Community Officer for advice.

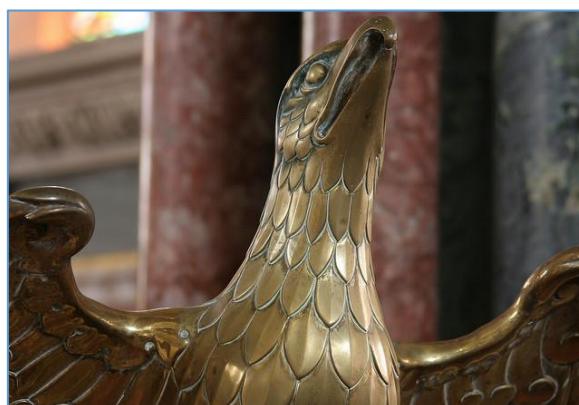
Equipment:



- absorbent towel or cloth
- mop and bucket
- lint free cloth
- chamois leather
- wax polish

4.2 Metals

Various metals including Brass, Bronze, Lead, Copper, Steel and Iron are often found in churches. They are used for both structural elements and as part of many monuments and decorative items and in candlesticks and crosses. These items are usually historic and although they do not absorb liquids, surfaces are easily damaged and often show signs of damage and decay.



How?

- Before cleaning, inspect the item to identify the material or materials used and any surface coatings and decorations.
- During this inspection any damage, decay, or painted decoration should be recorded. If any damage or decoration is found, do not carry out any cleaning until further advice is sought from the Conservation Team.

The below images give an indication of the materials and where they can be found.

Bronze and Brass are both based on copper mixed with various alloying materials. Bronze, Brass and Copper are commonly used for decorative items and inscription plaques. However, they are difficult to differentiate and should be treated with great care.



Iron is commonly used in architectural applications such as railings or structural restraints. It is often painted, although it may be in a rusty condition especially where it meets stonework. If unsure, iron and steel are both ferrous and can be checked with a magnet. Modern interventions will use stainless steel, which will have a shiny surface if un painted



Lead will appear as a dark material and is most likely found on monuments and an infill to lettering, or, as a liner to fonts. Historically, Lead is also used to fix ironwork in to masonry and may be found around the ends of railings.



Steel is rarely found in churches and is most likely to have been inserted as part of a modern intervention. It is usually only used in structural contexts such as additional supports or ties, and is generally painted. If it has been installed in the last twenty years, it is highly likely to be stainless steel, which is identifiable by using a magnet.



- It is advised not to use liquids whilst cleaning, including water due to the potential for surface damage.
- Provided there is no painted decoration, vacuum the item using a low powered variable speed vacuum set to the lowest power.

- Use a soft bristle brush to access any build-up of debris in detailed areas of any items.
- It is advised not to attempt removal of any surface discolouration as this may damage the underlying material. Any damage or marks should be photographed. This allows comparisons to be made next time the item is being cleaned to assess if there is ongoing decay.
- When cleaning Lead, it is not recommended to use brushes as it may release potentially dangerous lead dust. If a large area of lead is being cleaned, it is recommended that disposable overall and mask be worn.
- Where candlewax has collected on the surface of any items, it is best practice to remove as much as possible using a wooden spatula or similar tool. This process will not remove all of the wax and some may be left on the surface, which should be left to prevent any damage to the underlying material.
- If there is painted decoration on an item, please do not attempt any cleaning. Pigments within the paint can react to cleaning materials and often the paint is easily disturbed and can be lost.
- Brasso should not be used for polishing any metal items; it can scour the surface and remove historic layers of decoration. It can also leave the surface of the metal with an overly shiny surface.

Cleaning with Bats in residence

- Wear nitrile gloves and wash hands after completing any cleaning. It is recommended, that masks be worn during cleaning as bat droppings can irritate the lungs.
- It is important to remove droppings and urine deposits when found to reduce possible deterioration to the surface of metal.

- For droppings, use a sheet of paper and place as close to the affected area. Using a brush carefully lift and move the droppings onto the paper and dispose.
- For urine, if discovered early the priority is to absorb as much of the liquid as possible. Use an absorbent cloth or, heavy-duty paper towel.
- If urine deposits have dried, removed the residue salts by brushing with a soft bristled brush.

Why?

- Water is not recommended for any preventive cleaning.
- A trained conservator following a series of cleaning trials should only do the removal of any staining from the surface of any object.
- It is not advisable to use any chemical/commercial cleaners on any metallic items. The chemicals they contain can damage surfaces causing loss of detail and further deterioration. Even household cleaning products are too harsh for historic materials especially those which are abrasive in nature.
- Do not attempt to redecorate any metal items, as redecoration should not be undertaken without fully understanding the existing paintwork and any historic paint layers.
- If you have any concerns about the condition of any metal items within your building, please report these to the Local Community Officer.

Equipment:



- Vacuum
- Plain paper
- Broom
- Dustpan and brush
- Small wooden spatulas

4.3 Textiles

These may include altar cloths, kneelers, curtains, vestments, carpets, rugs, and upholstered furniture. Historic textiles are mostly made up of organic materials that are fibrous and absorbent. They are typically flexible and with age, they will distort if not supported correctly.

Horizontal surfaces are the most visible areas for a build-up of dust and dirt particles. It is important to be methodical, take time when cleaning textiles, and have sufficient help to move and handle items.



How?

- Inspect before cleaning to assess condition and use a magnifying glass to assist. If any damage is found, such as loose fringes, missing beadwork, or tears to the fabric, these need to be approached separately. As does the discovery of mould. Please seek advice before cleaning, from the Conservation team. Use a church cleaning record to log any defects or issues. This will help to monitor any further deterioration. Guidance should be sought for further care.
- If the textile has no visible or recorded damage, a vacuum is the most effective tool, as shown in the equipment list below. If it is possible to lay the textile on a flat surface to clean, this causes less stress to the fabric. Use a clean sheet of heavy-duty polythene to lay the textile on, supporting it sufficiently when you move it.
- The vacuum should preferably have a variable suction level and should be set at the lowest possible suction. Ideally, you can speak and hear the person stood with you above the vacuum noise.

- Before cleaning the textile, it is good practice to test a small area first. Cover the nozzle with a piece of muslin cloth, or a pair of tights, this will enable you to discover how much dust is deposited on the fabric and inform you if the textile might be too fragile to vacuum. If the test captures any loose fibres, please stop and seek further advice from the Conservation Team.
- Alternatively, place a mesh screen made of nylon or polyester between the vacuum head and textile surface, to enable the protection from the vacuum head. It also helps to stop any fibres going into the vacuum.
- Hold the vacuum just above the textile surface, but not in contact with the textile. As tempting as it may be, this does not increase the amount of dust removed, which is removed by the suction. Contact will only increase the likelihood of damage to the surface.
- For rugs and carpets in a good condition, a deep clean technique involves turning the rug or carpet upside down onto a clean surface. (Either placing on clean sheeting or a clean floor surface). Using a flat fly swat or rubber paddle, use a gentle patting motion to the back of the surface. Carefully lift away and loose dirt deposits onto the floor beneath. Then turn the rug/carpet back over and carefully vacuum. Vacuum in the direction of the pile. This method is for deep cleaning and should not be carried out regularly. (Please note sacrificial rugs, or druggets, can be vacuumed and patted regularly).
- If you discover any loose fragments, place in a clear bag and label the object with information about where it is from and with a date and location found.
- If you discover mould, please do not proceed before seeking advice from the Conservation Team. Mould spores can permanently damage your respiratory system. If in doubt, do not proceed any further and seek further guidance.

Cleaning with Bats in residence

- Wear nitrile gloves and wash hands after completing any cleaning. Wear a mask.
- It is important to remove droppings and urine deposits when found to reduce possible deterioration to the fibres.
- For droppings, use a sheet of paper and place as close to the affected area. Using a brush carefully lift and move the droppings onto the paper and dispose.
- For urine, if discovered early the priority is to absorb as much of the liquid as possible. Use an absorbent cloth or heavy-duty paper towel. It is not advised to rub the affected area as this works the urine further into the fibres. Follow up by placing a clean absorbent towel over the area and rest this on top until dry.

Why?

- Water is not recommended for preventive cleaning. A textile specialist should only undertake the removal of staining or residues.
- The introduction of water to organic fibres can cause greater damage and lead to other issues.
- Issues that occur; shrinkage, mould growth, loss of flexibility that may lead to tears/splits. It also increases risk from pest damage.

Equipment:



- absorbent towel or cloth
- plain paper
- tweezers

4.4 Books

Books are made with a variety of materials, paper, ink and adhesives, leather, parchment, fabric, hemp cord and thread. These are organic materials. Paper, thread and boards that are used to construct a book are usually made of cellulose.

Leather (tanned) and parchment (untanned) are made using skins from sheep, calves and goats, and occasionally from other animals. Leather usually has a polished surface. It can be in colours of red, green, blue, black and most frequently shades of brown. Deterioration is evidenced by scuffing, some peeling, cracking, and flaking.

Parchment is usually white/ cream, but similarly to leather, can also be coloured yellow, red or green. Black or blue parchment is rarer. Usually described as feeling alike to plastic, if there any damaged areas you will see a white colour exposed.

Bookcloth is another material used for coverings. Its appearance should have a surface with a sheen or slight shine and any damaged areas will show the weave of the book threads.

It is important to identify whether books are bound using a reversed leather technique before you attempt to clean. No brushes should be used on reversed leather. Reversed leather has the appearance of suede, and fibres are visible and it feels rough to the touch.

Improper handling and the effects of humidity and light usually cause deterioration. High relative humidity levels can increase risks of moulds and damage from pests.

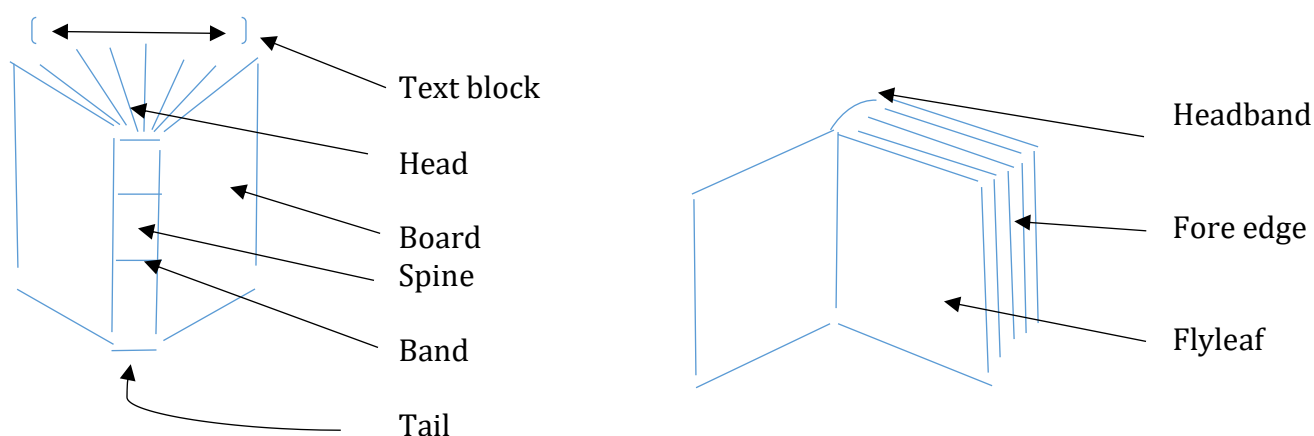
If books are stored within your church, smaller books are ideally stored stood up (vertical). Larger volumes can be stored flat, but should not be stacked upon each other if possible.



How

- Cleanly washed hands, free of any hand lotion or creams, are important for handling books. If you are unable to wash your hands prior to cleaning, wear a pair of nitrile gloves.
- Remove any rings that contain stones, as these can cause damage to the surface.
- If the book is large and you are unable to hold the book comfortably in one hand, work on a flat surface, preferably with a sheet of plastic underneath.
- Cleaning should all be 'dry', using a brush, not a duster, and directing the dust preferably into a vacuum fitted with a piece of gauze or muslin cloth over the nozzle. If you do not have a vacuum, an alternative would be to direct dust into a container.
- Cover any metal ferrules to the brush with tape to protect the object you are cleaning.

- Use a pony hairbrush, dust along the top edges of the pages, and direct the brush from the spine to the fore edge of the book.



- Then dust down the fore edge along to the bottom of pages. Always working from the spine to fore edge.
- To dust inside the front and backboards of books, it is beneficial to support the book on a cushion or small beanbag if possible. A book suffers less stress if open at less than 90 degrees.
- Use a separate pony hairbrush and use a fan motion, starting in the centre of the book at the joint working outwards.
- Checking the remaining pages for any mould or insect damage is good practice, but it is not necessary to dust every page, particularly if the book is displayed or stored closed, within the church.
- Take brushes home to wash after cleaning. Use a mild soap, ensuring they are thoroughly rinsed and leave to air dry.
- If you discover external mould on the surface of a book, please contact the Local Community Officer in the first instance. Do not remove mould if you suffer from any respiratory illness.

- If you discover mould spores within a book, removing the mould can be very damaging to the paper as it will have become extremely fragile. Seek further guidance.
- If a book has a detached or semi-detached board, you can use cotton tape to secure the board(s) to the text block. Use two pieces of tape and place around the book, positioning tape between the bands on the spine, roughly 2-3cm from the top and bottom of the spine. Tie small bows at the fore edge, and not touching the text block.

Cleaning with Bats in residence

- Wear nitrile gloves and wash hands after completing any cleaning. Wear a mask.
- It is important to remove droppings and urine deposits when found to reduce possible deterioration to the book.
- For droppings, use a sheet of paper and place as close to the affected area. Using a brush carefully lift and move the droppings onto the paper and dispose.
- For urine, if discovered early the priority is to absorb as much of the liquid as possible. Use an absorbent cloth or heavy-duty paper towel.

Why?

Accredited conservators use water in remedial conservation repairs and it is possible to remove staining. However, each object is inspected and an appropriate plan created based on a conservator's expertise and experience. The use of water based solutions or milk to clean books is not suitable. It can result in mould growth and risk of pest damage.

Oils are not used to clean leather as they have a detrimental effect to the surface making them stiff. As the oil dries, it can also cause the colours to change.

Equipment



- Vacuum
- Beanbag/cushion
- Heavy duty polythene sheeting
- Plain paper
- Absorbent towel
- Muslin cloth

4.5 Stone

Stone can come in many different forms within a church, from the very building blocks the church is built from to finely carved monuments and memorials. Each different stone type can require different approaches when cleaning so it is important to have a basic understanding of what stone types are present in your church. The list below gives a general overview of what basic stone types, but if you are unsure please seek further advice from us:

Limestone Light in colour, generally smooth to the touch with a powdery texture. Sometimes fossils are present within the stonework. Generally used for walls, floors and decorative elements such as capitals and arches.



Sandstone Darker in colour and can come in red and green. Texture is granular and looks like compacted sand. Generally used for walls, floors, and some decorative elements.



Marble

Comes in a range of colours from white through to black. Smooth and polished surface often with veins of other colours running through it. Generally used for monuments and memorials both internal and external.



Purbeck marble

Darker in colour generally grey, but can come in red and green. Polished surface, but not as smooth as marble. Identifiable by snail fossils. Generally used as a non-structural decorative elements inside churches such as columns.



Alabaster

Smooth and light in colour. Has a slightly translucent appearance and looks similar to soap. Generally used for internal monuments and memorials.



How?

- Before cleaning, inspect the area, monument, memorial etc. for any loose fragments or cracks/splits. Make note if any areas are found and avoid cleaning these so that more damage is not caused. If you find anything of concern, please seek further advice from the Conservation Team.
- For **stone floors**, use a soft bristle broom to clean away dust and debris, cleaning methodically from one end of the church to the other. Take care when working near walls and column bases with the wooden handle. Use a soft bristle brush to remove dust and debris from any corners or hard to reach places such as under pews and around monuments. Brush up piles of dust and debris with a dustpan and brush. If lots of dust is present, wear a dust mask to prevent inhalation of dust particles. Particularly dirty floors can occasionally be cleaned using a damp mop, moistened with clean water and dried with a clean dry mop. Remove any excess water as quickly as possible.
- For **stone walls**, use a cobweb brush with a telescopic handle to remove any cobwebs taking care not to hit any monuments or windows. For any ledges, stringcourses, window ledges, tops of capitals etc. use a dustpan and brush to gently brush any dust or debris off the ledge and into the dustpan. Dust can also be brushed straight into a vacuum nozzle, but avoid using the vacuum nozzle directly onto the stonework as it may cause damage and suck up any loose fragments. A long handled soft bristled broom can be used to brush down wall surfaces if there are no fragile areas or loose stonework present. Do not use on walls that are lime washed or are painted plaster.
- For **carved stonework** and **stone monuments**, work from the top to the bottom, using a soft bristle brush to remove dust and debris into a dustpan brush or vacuum nozzle. Take care in corners and detailed carved areas on monuments, as there may be evidence of pigment if the monument was originally painted.

- For stonework with **efflorescence**, salts sitting on the surface of the stone can be removed by gently brushing off into a dustpan. Leaving the salts in place can cause them to build up into a hard crust, which will cause any further moisture in the stone to be trapped and will not evaporate naturally.
- For stains that sit on the surface of any stonework such as mud, bird droppings, candle wax etc. remove as much residue as possible with brushes. Wooden tools such as spatulas can be used to gently lever debris from the surface, but should only be undertaken if the surface is in good condition.

Cleaning with Bats in residence

- Wear nitrile gloves and wash hands after completing any cleaning. Wear a mask.
- It is important to remove dropping and urine deposits when found to reduce possible deterioration to the surface of stonework.
- For droppings, use a sheet of paper and place close to the affected area. Using a brush carefully lift and move the droppings onto the paper and dispose.
- For urine, if discovered early the priority is to absorb as much of the liquid as possible. Use an absorbent cloth or heavy-duty paper towel.
- If urine deposits have dried, removed the residue salts by brushing with a soft bristled brush.

Why?

- Water is not recommended for regular preventive cleaning. The removal of deep staining and residues on stonework should be left for a specialist stone conservator.

- The introduction of water to any type of stonework can be damaging, but especially for alabaster, which dissolves readily in water. Any spillages or excess water should be removed as soon as possible.
- Damp stonework can attract biological growth such as algae and lichens that damage the stonework as they feed. As most church buildings are not heated, water in stonework can freeze in cold temperatures causing stone to crack and delaminate.
- It is not advisable to use any chemical/commercial cleaners on any stonework as the chemicals can damage surfaces causing loss of detail and further deterioration. Even household cleaning products are too harsh for historic materials especially those which are abrasive in nature.
- Coatings, waxes and varnishes are sometimes suggested to seal stone floors, but these are to be avoided especially on floors laid directly onto earth as they trap moisture-causing stone to deteriorate and delaminate over time.

If you have any concerns about the condition of stonework within your building, contact the Local Community Officer in the first instance.

Equipment:



- Vacuum
- Plain paper
- Broom
- Dustpan and brush



- Mop (DRY/WET)
- Small wooden spatulas
- Absorbent towel

4.6 Windows

Glass in church windows generally comes in plain quarried and stained glass, which is often painted. Both tend to be leaded and fixed into the stonework or brickwork with iron support bars. Some churches have wooden framed windows with frames again fixed into stone or brickwork.



How?

- Before cleaning, inspect the window you are about to clean for any broken glass, corrosion or breaks to the lead comes or iron support rods, rot in window frames, or damaged areas of stonework around the glass caused by the metal framework. If you find anything of concern, seek further advice from us.
- Using a cobweb brush with a telescopic handle carefully remove cobwebs working from the top of the window to the bottom. Take care not to knock the glass with the brush and wear a dust mask if there is a lot of dust and debris present. If windows are high and very dusty, you may wish to wear a protective suit to protect your own clothing.

Cleaning with Bats in residence

- Wear nitrile gloves and wash hands after completing any cleaning. Wear a mask and protective clothing if windows are high and debris is likely to fall on you.

- It is more likely that bat droppings will be found on windowsills and ledges, rather than on the glass itself. If found, a cobweb brush can be used to gently remove droppings onto the window ledge for removal.
- If droppings do not come off readily, leave in place, forcing them off may cause damage to the glass surface.
- To remove droppings from windowsills, use a sheet of paper and place close to the affected area. Using a brush carefully lift and move the droppings onto the paper and dispose.
- If early detection of urine is discovered on windowsills, it is a priority to absorb as much of the liquid as possible. Use an absorbent cloth or heavy-duty paper towel.
- If urine deposits have dried, removed the residue salts by brushing with a soft bristled brush.

Why?

- Water is not recommended for preventive cleaning of glass. It may cause corrosion to the ironwork (ferramenta) holding the window in place. Washing and rubbing the surface of painted stained glass may result in the loss of detail. Only a specialist glass conservator should investigate whether this type of work is necessary.
- Due to the lead comes used on stained glass and plain quarried windows, direct localised brushing is not advised due to the potential presence of lead dust.
- It is not advisable to use any chemical/commercial cleaners on historic glass as the chemicals can damage surfaces causing loss of detail and further deterioration. Even household cleaning products are too harsh for historic materials especially those that are abrasive in nature.
- If you have any concerns about the condition of the glass within your building, contact us for advice.

Equipment:

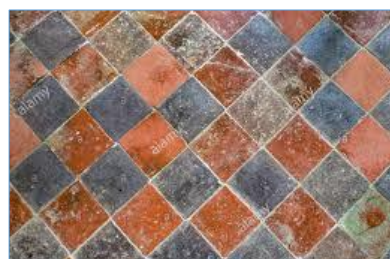


- Protective suit
- Plain paper
- Cobweb brush

4.7 Ceramic Materials

Ceramics can come in many forms, ranging from plain terracotta floor tiles to highly decorated wall tiles. They can give a beautiful shot of colour to the building, but can be fragile and easily damaged if not cared for properly. Each ceramic material needs different approaches for cleaning. It is important to have a basic understanding of what types are present in your church. The list below gives a general overview of the most common ceramic material found in churches, but if you are unsure please seek further advice from us:

Terracotta floor tiles Deep orange/red in colour and can also come in black to give a contrasting colour in patterns.



Encaustic floor tiles - Medieval Generally, deep orange/red background with a lighter buff colour pattern or image inlaid. Laid to create geometric patterns.



Encaustic floor tiles – Edwardian/Victorian Tiles in a range of colours and sizes from white through blue, green, red, buff, grey and black. Usually laid to make elaborate geometric patterns.



Highly decorative glazed wall tiles

These tiles come in all shapes and sizes and in every colour and pattern. Often used for decorative elements, but sometimes used across whole walls and on screens and reredos.



Glazed bricks

Glazed bricks come in a range of colours, but tend to be plain and without pattern. Highly glazed surface and generally brick shape. Generally used on walls.



Mosaic

Images and patterns created from many small ceramic and/or glass tiles. Found on floors, walls and decorative elements.



How?

- Before cleaning any ceramic material, whether on the floor, walls or decorative element, thoroughly inspect for damage to surfaces, cracks, chips or deterioration to any glaze. Make note of any cracked or loose areas and avoid cleaning these to limit further damage. If you find anything of concern, seek further advice from us.
- For general cleaning of **tiled floors**, use a soft bristle broom to clean away dust and debris. Clean methodically from one end of the church to the other and take care not to knock walls and column bases with the wooden handle. Use a soft bristle brush to remove dust and debris from any corners or hard to reach places such as under pews and around

monuments. Brush up piles of dust and debris with a dustpan and brush. If lots of dust is present, wear a dust mask to prevent inhalation of dust particles.

- For general cleaning of **tiled walls** and **decorative tiles**, use a cobweb brush with a telescopic handle on large expanses of wall tiles to remove any cobwebs, taking care not to hit any monuments or windows. Use a long handled soft bristled broom to gently brush down wall tiles if there are no fragile areas or loose tiles evident. Elaborate tiles with raised areas can be cleaned using a soft bristle brush working from the top down.
- Occasionally, particularly dirty floors tiles can be cleaned using a damp mop moistened with clean water and dried off with a clean dry mop. Only if the tiles are glazed and they are in good condition. Any excess water must be quickly removed. Seek further advice from us before you begin.
- Glazed wall tiles can occasionally be cleaned with a damp cloth using clean water. Any excess water must be removed as quickly as possible and care should be taken not to drip water onto the floor underneath.
- For stains that sit on the surface of any tiles such as mud, bird droppings, candle wax etc. remove as much residue as possible with brushes. Gently lever debris from the surface with wooden tools such as spatulas. Only undertake if the surface is in good condition. If there is any residual staining on glazed tiles, this can be removed with an absorbent cloth slightly dampened with clear water. Excess water should be dabbed away with a dry cloth as soon as possible.
- Water staining (white blooms) are common on floor tiles that have been laid directly onto the ground below. Unfortunately, there is no easy way to remove this staining and it should be undertaken by a professional conservator.

Cleaning with Bats in residence

- Wear nitrile gloves and wash hands after completing any cleaning. Wear a mask and protective clothing if it is likely that debris will fall on you.
- It is important to remove droppings and urine deposits when found to reduce possible deterioration to the surface of tiles.
- For droppings on tile surfaces, removed with a soft bristle brush, gently brushing them onto a sheet of paper for easy disposal. If droppings are on areas of damaged tiles take great care not to disturb the damaged surface.
- For urine on tiles, if discovered early the priority is to absorb as much of the liquid as possible. Use an absorbent cloth or heavy-duty paper towel.
- If urine deposits have dried, remove the residue salts by brushing with a soft bristled brush. Use a damp cloth to remove residue, but only from glazed tiles in good condition.

Why?

- Water is not recommended for any preventive cleaning unless specified. A specialist ceramic conservator should complete the removal of deep staining and residues on any type of ceramic material.
- Where water has been advised, avoid using on unglazed tiles and areas with cracks or where the glaze is damaged. Excess water can penetrate the tiles and cause deterioration.
- Damp tile floors that are laid directly onto earth can attract biological growth such as algae, which can stain tiles and damage any glazes. As many church buildings are not heated, water in any ceramic material can freeze in cold temperatures causing cracks and deterioration to glazes.

- It is not advisable to use any chemical/commercial cleaners on any ceramic materials as the chemicals can damage surfaces causing loss of detail and further deterioration. Even household cleaning products are too harsh for historic materials especially those that are abrasive in nature.
- If you have any concerns about the condition of any ceramic material within your building, contact us for advice.
- Coatings, waxes and varnishes are sometimes suggested to seal tile floors, but these are to be avoided especially for unglazed tiles, as they trap moisture that can cause tiles to crumble and split over time.

Equipment:



- Lint free cloth/duster
- Plain paper
- Wooden spatula
- Cobweb brush
- Mop (wet & dry)
- Broom
- Dust pan & brush

5. Recommended Equipment List & Suppliers

Brushes

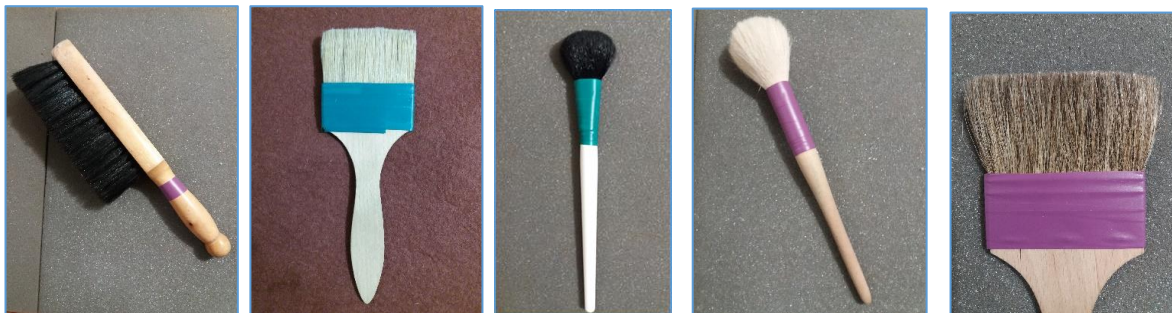
Banister

Hogs hair

Pony hair

Goats hair

Squirrels hair



Stiff



Soft

Bristle types

- Cobweb brush with extension handle

Cloths

- E-cloths
- Hemmed, lint free cloths
- Chamois leather
- Cotton wool
- Paper towels

Gloves

- Nitrile non powdered
- White cotton

Masks

- Disposable dust mask, recommend FFP3 in case of mould discoveries

Polish/Wax

- Beeswax polish, such as Harrells Traditional wax polish

- Micro crystalline wax polish such as Renaissance wax

Other equipment

- Cotton tape
- Handheld magnifying glass
- Fine nylon net/muslin cloth
- Small cushion or bean bag
- Fly swat/tamper paddle
- Wooden sticks (toothpicks/cocktail), spatulas
- Cotton mop heads & mop bucket
- Dry mop head and handle
- Dust pan & brush
- Heavy duty polythene sheeting or Tyvek
- Vacuum (in addition, consider a Museum Vac if significant number of textile objects)
- Non-ionic detergent, conservation grade
- Protective clothing
- Broom
- Plain paper
- Pencils
- Tweezers
- Camera

Suggested suppliers

Supermarkets for E- cloths, mops, buckets, paper towels

Hardware stores for plastic sheeting, mops, buckets, disposable masks, nitrile gloves, chamois leather, cobweb brushes, brooms

Conservation by Design: for brushes, Tyvek, Museum Vac, cotton tape, masks, gloves and conservation specific materials

☎ [01234 846300](tel:01234846300)

Email info@cxdglobal.com

Website www.cxdinternational.com

Preservation Equipment: for brushes, cotton tape, Tyvek, Museum Vac, masks, gloves and conservation specific materials

☎ 01379 647400

Email: info@preservationequipment.com

Website: www.preservationequipment.com

Picreator Enterprises Ltd: for micro crystalline polishes and gloves

☎ 0208 2028972

Email: info@picreator.co.uk

Website <https://picreator.co.uk/>

W.S.Jenkins & Co Ltd: for beeswax polishes for furniture and floorboards

☎ 0208 8082336

Email: sales@wsjenkins.co.uk

Website <https://wsjenkins.co.uk/>



Object Condition & Care template	
Object:	Location within the church:
Materials & Dimensions:	
Observations:	
Illustration or photograph (highlight any problems such as splits, insect damage):	



History of object: (i.e. can it be moved, does it have any loose elements, any previous conservation repairs?)		
Record of care e.g. dusted, polished	Date	By whom



Church:	Area: (e.g. Chancel, Nave, South aisle)	
Summary of specific area:		
Cleaning completed (e.g. dusted pews with vacuum and brush)	By whom	Date





7. Suggested Cleaning Calendar

	Sweep/dry mop floors	Wet mop stone floors	De-cobweb windows	Dust windowsills	Dust metalwork	Check textiles and remove dust if required	Dust monuments & memorials	Dust timberwork e.g. pews, pulpits
January	X							
February	X			X				
March	X		X				X	
April	X		X		X		X	X
May	X	X				X		X
June	X			X				
July	X							
August	X							
September	X		X					
October	X		X					X
November	X			X				X
December	X							