

Combating metal theft with the new roof security alarm

Case Study: Diocese of Salisbury

A team of thieves has been working around the Dorchester area, stealing lead from roofs, often cutting small areas out of large sheet lead roofs, or just cutting and removing flashings. St Mary's Church in Puddletown had a spate of attacks mid-summer 2010, striking at the lead valley between the Nave and Aisles. What was particularly galling was the fact that the thieves cut out the base of the gutter, near the outlet, so water from the whole expanse of roof came through the hole into the church below, causing extensive damage. It was also very difficult to make a temporary repair watertight in this area.

Some advice was provided by Ecclesiastical's local Insurance Consultant and Surveyor, Andrew Dawson, and also the Dorset Police Crime Reduction Officer. Anti-climb paint was applied to rainwater downpipes, and a roof security alarm system that Ecclesiastical had been trialling on churches in metal theft hotspots was installed.

It had only been installed for a couple of weeks, when Jim Wilson from St Mary's was advised that the alarm had been set off at 2.30am on a Saturday morning. On attending the church that morning, finger marks were found in the anti-climb paint on a drain pipe and there was evidence that an attempt at a further theft had been made, this time without causing any further damage.

The alarm has been in place since September 2010 with no further losses.

Jim Wilson says *'The system appears to be working well, having scared off potential thieves at least once. There has been a lot of interest in the system, with a visit from all the Dorset Police Crime Reduction Officers and I have shown around many local churches so that they can see how it works. Many of these churches are now having the system fitted.'*

For more information about the new electronic roof security system, or to arrange a free* no-obligation site survey please call **0845 600 9659**. You can also download an alarm fact sheet at www.ecclesiastical.com/churchmatters For expert advice tailored to your church, please contact your local Insurance Consultant and Surveyor (IC&S) who will be pleased to help. You can also speak to our customer services team on **0845 777 3322**.

*UK mainland only – travel expenses may be applicable offshore

Pictures: (Top left) St Mary's Church in Puddletown. (Bottom left and right) A typical alarm installation: Alarm sounder and blue strobe in church tower, and infrared motion detector.



Beaufort House,
Brunswick Road,
Gloucester, GL1 1JZ

Ecclesiastical Insurance Office plc. (EIO) Reg. No. 24869. This company is registered in England at Beaufort House, Brunswick Road, Gloucester, GL1 1JZ, UK. EIO is authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority and is a member of the Financial Ombudsman Service and Association of British Insurers.