

Combating metal theft with the new roof security alarm

Case Study: Diocese of Manchester

Restoring peace of mind

In July 2008, the church of St. Stephen's and All Martyrs in Oldham was reopened following an extensive restoration. Thanks to the generosity of many organisations and the hard work of the local congregation, over £350,000 was raised and the church was brought back into the centre of the community.

However, the celebrations were soon cut short. Not long after St. Stephen's opened, thieves stole £25,000 worth of lead from the valley gutter over the north wall. Not only did this result in a terrible financial loss, but it also created problems within the fabric of the church – before remedial action could be taken, rainwater poured down the inside of the building.

Two years of hassle and cost

Over the following two years the thieves struck again and again – six times in all. Lead was taken from the north side aisle, south side aisle and then the newly repaired valley gutter once more.

Mary Taylor, Churchwarden, told us: *"You can imagine the heartache this caused all those who had worked so hard to restore the building. Of course there was also a financial cost and, on top of that, each theft caused a mountain of administration – applying to the diocese for Faculties, dealing with builders' quotes as well as overseeing the repairs and redecoration."*

Alarm stops metal thefts

As the church was insured by Ecclesiastical, we approached St. Stephen's with the idea of a roof alarm, as part of an initial trial.

The system was designed to provide comprehensive protection for the roof, and is linked to a strobe light in the tower and a 'voice' alarm to deter the metal thieves. The unit

was also linked to a 24-hour manned monitoring centre, which could quickly send out security personnel to investigate any disturbance.

"Since we had the alarm put in we haven't had any thefts at all," reports Mary. "This has saved us no end of money and time sorting out repairs – not to mention the peace of mind it gives."



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) St. Stephen's and All Martyrs. (Bottom left and right) A typical alarm installation: Alarm sounder and blue strobe in church tower, and infrared motion detector.



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