

## DIOCESE OF GUILDFORD

### GUIDE TO FACULTY APPLICATIONS FOR LARGER PROJECTS

A supplementary guide to the DAC process

*This paper is to be read in conjunction with the 'Guide to Faculty Applications'*

#### Background

The 'faculty' process in the Church of England is in many ways the ecclesiastical equivalent of the secular planning process. However, it has several major advantages: it is consultative (DAC members work with the parish to achieve their objectives), the DAC is there to support the parish, it has a considerable body of experience and much of this experience is with our church heritage and mission. It means that the members understand the issues and can often come up with practical and imaginative suggestions towards achieving the parish's objectives.

The DAC's advice usually falls into a number of broad categories of change:

- Liturgical change - how will it affect worship?
- Pastoral - will it enhance the ministry and mission of the parish?
- Aesthetic change - will it enhance or at least not be detrimental to the building?
- Technical - are the proper materials being used, will it work technically and is it specified clearly and unambiguously?

When there is a conflict between the need to conserve the heritage of the building and the need to adapt to the needs of mission, the DAC is always sensitive to the parish's requirements. We want to conserve our heritage but we recognise that the church is a living, dynamic organisation that has always adapted and evolved over time. The DAC can often help to balance these conflicting needs in an acceptable way.

#### Large Projects

Large projects can be very stressful for parishes not used to the special demands and focused time required to make good decisions, to manage and to plan the work. It is good practice to break the project into discrete stages and to deal with each stage systematically in turn. The Royal Institute of British Architects define a 'work stage' approach where

- Stages A and B are concerned with identifying the needs and writing the project brief;
- Stage C is the preparation of outline proposals (for review and confirmation) and
- Stage D is for detailed proposals (suitable for a planning application).

It is also good practice to have a project structure where only one person is allowed to issue instructions on behalf of the parish and to agree variations with the appointed architect. This individual (who might perhaps be the chairman of the PCC sub-committee handling the project) needs to establish clear lines of communication with the project manager (known as the 'lead consultant' in building projects) who might well be the appointed architect but who must not be one of the building contractors. Many projects also benefit by talking to other parishes which have faced similar problems. The DAC secretary can provide contact details for such parishes.

#### DAC Involvement

Early DAC involvement is essential if unnecessary costs are to be avoided. If too much work is done before consultation two problems are likely to arise when the DAC make comments and suggestions - the architect (or designer) may feel obliged to defend the existing proposal and changing the proposals will mean wasted work and additional cost. It is up to the church

architect to decide the right time to consult the DAC but as a guide it is often wise to do so before Work Stage C starts (to submit the Brief, the Statement of Need, the Statement of Significance and the Design Statement) and again before Work Stage D starts (to go through the outline proposals). Then when the final faculty application is submitted there will be no surprises.

In complex cases the appointed architect may request to attend the DAC meeting, or be invited to do so by the DAC, perhaps supported by the parish project leader and incumbent, to explain his/her thinking and to answer any detailed questions. Note that the DAC meets on the first Friday of every month and that it needs reasonable time both to understand complex proposals and to slot architect's visits within the busy agenda. It may also be the case that the DAC wish to visit the site of the work to see the proposals in context. In this case the secretary of the DAC will arrange a date.

It is very rare that major proposals can be recommended by the DAC at its first meeting (although there are often pressures from the parish for a quick decision). The discussion between the DAC, the parish and the architect should be seen as a collaborative process where we are all striving to achieve the best possible solution for the parish and the enhancement of the church (taking into account all the circumstances). To take an extra month or two to get it right is not unreasonable, but the timescale can often be shortened if the DAC is consulted early in the process.

### **Information required for the Faculty Application**

As a minimum, the documentation required to make a faculty application for a larger project is the same as that listed in the 'Guide to Faculty Applications'.

The DAC places much emphasis on the **Statement of Significance** (summarising the development and history of the church), the **Statement of Need** (why the proposals are necessary for continued worship and mission) and the **Design Statement** (taking account of the need for good design in the proposals). These documents should be prepared as early as possible and certainly before any detailed proposals are drawn up. They should be updated in line with any amendments made to the proposals.

To make a final recommendation, the DAC requires sufficient information about the proposed works to make a reasoned judgement on the faculty application. If the steps outlined above are followed then the progression will be a natural one for the architect who will know the nature of information necessary for planning applications. Whether or not an application for planning permission is necessary, the same or very similar supporting documentation is required for submission to the DAC.

Location, site and whole churchyard plans are necessary to put the proposals in context as well as full elevations and full floor plans. Contract details, specification notes and material samples are often appropriate to explain the design concept and avoid misunderstandings.

The DAC is also anxious to avoid the use of inappropriate materials, particularly when used in historic buildings, and generally will follow the broad conservation principles recommended by the SPAB (Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings) in this respect. Architects cannot be expected to be experts in everything and so the parish should appoint their own consultants in specialist areas (for example structural & services engineers, acoustic, fabric, stained glass and liturgical advisers as necessary) to support the submission to the DAC.

With regard to listed buildings, all the above are necessary plus additional information to show that SPAB principles are being followed. Again this is equivalent to the information required for a full listed building application (even though one would not be required by the local authority) plus any additional information that might be required in response to a conditional approval.

### Consultation with secular authorities

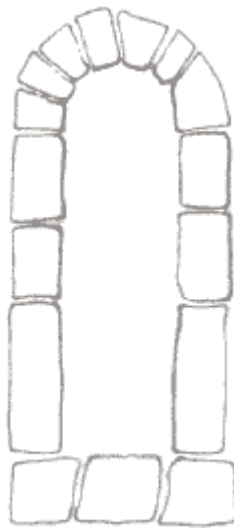
In parallel with the application to the DAC, parishes are required to consult English Heritage (for Grade I and Grade II\* buildings) and the appropriate amenity society depending on the age of the church - the SPAB, Georgian Group, Victorian Society or Twentieth Century Society. Planning permission will also be required for material changes to the external appearance of the building. It is good practice to involve these authorities at an early stage in the process so that any concerns can be addressed before detailed proposals are formulated. The DAC cannot recommend a faculty until the views of these authorities have been obtained and planning permission granted.

### DAC membership

The DAC membership reflects the breadth of skills available to help parishes. Membership is typically

- 7 clergy (the two archdeacons and two incumbents from each archdeaconry plus a liturgical adviser). The clergy representatives are available to parishes to help make the case for pastoral change and to discuss DAC working processes
- 8 to 10 architects, structural engineers and surveyors (with experience of working with historic buildings/churches)
- 4 to 6 generalists (representing the 'person in the pew' )
- 8 to 10 specialists (in such subjects as textiles, design, lighting, heating, sound, clocks, bells, organs, stained glass). Some of the specialists do not attend every meeting but are available to provide expert opinions when needed.

The lay membership are volunteers who give their time without charge.



### Further information

'Church extensions and alterations' booklet published by Church House Publishing, Church House, Great Smith St, London SW1P 3NZ

For a copy of the 'Guide to Faculty Applications', please consult the DAC secretary,

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