



Diocese of Ripon & Leeds Diocesan Advisory Committee Guidelines

APPOINTING A NEW INSPECTING ARCHITECT

The Inspection of Churches Measure lays down that each consecrated church must be inspected every five years by an architect or a surveyor whose name is on the approved list maintained by the DAC (Diocesan Advisory Committee). To save tedious repetition, for the remainder of this paper the word “architect” should be taken to include “chartered building surveyor”.

The Inspecting Architect appointed to carry out the quinquennial survey will normally be asked to prepare specifications and oversee major repairs, and to advise generally on matters affecting the church building and its surroundings.

You may be looking for an architect because the previous one has retired, or because the PCC is not happy with the service it has been getting. If the latter you should give notice to your existing architect, a letter is all that is needed. At this point it may be that you will receive a fee account for any recent work your architect has undertaken for the PCC, which has not previously been charged for. In passing it is worth noting that some architects are generous in their charging policy to PCCs, and in regards to abortive projects. If their appointment is being terminated, it is perhaps to be understood if a fee account is raised for outstanding work.

Who can you choose?

The DAC maintains a list of architects who have been approved for inspecting churches. The practice in the Diocese is that any PCC can select any architect on the list. The individual choice does not have to be approved by the DAC.

You can obtain a copy of the list from the DAC Secretary. The DAC does not recommend individual names: the choice is the decision of the PCC. On the other hand the DAC Secretary is happy to suggest names which might be considered for a shortlist and can identify other parishes which have experience of the people concerned. The following is a procedure which has worked well.

- 1) Appoint a small group of people who are able to meet with the architects and come back to the PCC with a recommendation.
- 2) The group should select a shortlist of three names from the approved list.
- 3) Architects can then be contacted and asked if they would be happy to be considered.
- 4) Assuming that they are, the group could then either
 - a) meet the architects at the church for a discussion
 - b) ask if the group can meet at their office

There are pros and cons to both a) and b), if you go to them you can get a feel of how big or small the architect's practice is, its general style, and the resources available to it. You will also learn about the sort of work done by the practice, and how your requirements fit in. If you do visit an architect's office, take along some photos and a ground plan of the church – these will help explain what the building is like and what your concerns are. It may also be helpful to take a copy of the statement of significance if you have one.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR AND ASK

a) Geographical location

It may seem sensible to choose the architect who lives nearest to your church, but this should not influence your choice unduly. Most architects travel widely and will not always need to make a special trip to your church. However you should be clear on the matter of travelling expenses.

b) Conservation skills experience

The main requirement for looking after a traditional building is a sympathetic understanding of materials and construction methods. The DAC puts great emphasis on this in selecting architects for the list. It is most important that the architect has plenty of experience with older buildings, but these need not necessarily be churches.

c) Eligibility for English Heritage (EH) grant work

If your PCC is considering application to EH for a grant towards major repairs then you will need to consider employing an appropriately accredited practitioner, as EH have, since April 2003, required that all grant assisted work must be supervised by an architect who is on the register of Architects Accredited in Building Conservation (AABC).

d) Fees

This is an important area. The fees for quinquennial surveys are set by the individual practice. An increasing number of architects are charging for extras on top of the standard fees. These extras can include travelling expenses, photography, copying, etc.

More significant is the architect's policy on charging for other work. Architects will charge for substantial work, for example specifying and overseeing a re-roofing project. You should ask about the fee structure for this kind of work, also and most importantly, you should ask about the architect's policy on "casual" advice. You will want to consult on a number of matters, including possible adaptation projects that may never get off the ground. How much advice and service is the architect prepared to give for free.

e) Church experience

What experience does the architect have of parish life? If the architect is actively involved in their own church, this may be a bonus, however it is not essential. What is

important is that the person is in sympathy with the requirements of the parish and is prepared to work with the voluntary structures of the PCC and/or fabric committee.

f) Mobility

Is the architect happy to use ladders? This is quite an appropriate discussion point, particularly in relation to the type of access ladders at your church, for example in the tower.

APPOINTING SOMEONE THAT YOU KNOW

It may be that you or someone on your PCC would like to appoint an architect who is already known to the parish, and who may or may not be on the approved list.

To deal with the latter point first, any architect can apply to be included on the list at any time. The DAC will need to be convinced that they have the knowledge and practical experience needed for work on your type of building.

As a general rule however the DAC does not encourage PCCs to use architects (whether on the list or not) who have close connections with the parish. Conflicts of interest can sometimes occur which may place the PCC or its architect in a difficult position. Even where there is no direct conflict of interest, the relationship may cause difficulty or embarrassment to the PCC, if things do not work out satisfactorily.

This is especially so if the architect is doing the work for nothing or for a reduced fee, perhaps as a form of Christian stewardship. A number of parishes have found it difficult in these situations to apply the necessary pressure if things have not progressed as smoothly as they should. For this reason it is usually wiser to maintain a strictly arms-length relationship and to avoid appointing a parishioner or even a close friend of a parishioner, so that the PCC's hands are not tied.

FEES

- 1) Work undertaken by an architect¹ must be commissioned by the parish and is subject to the payment of professional fees which are the sole responsibility of the parish.
- 2) The relationship between the parish and its architect is a matter for mutual trust and professional understanding. In selecting an architect it is important that the parish ensures that their chosen architect has not only the requisite experience but also the appropriate personality and personal style to work in conjunction with the parish.

¹ By "Architect" the diocese means one of the following:

- A A registered architect in private practice as a sole principal
- B A partnership where at least one of the partners is a registered architect
- C A company where at least one of the directors is a registered architect

Provided that in each case evidence can be produced that Professional Indemnity Insurance cover is in place for a sum not less than £500,000 and

Provided that a named registered architect from the practice or company is nominated as the architect who is directly responsible to the parish as client.

Appointments made solely on the cheapest quote can, as in so many other fields, prove unsatisfactory.

- 3) The Diocesan Advisory Committee advise that an architect should be retained in respect of all works requiring a faculty with the following exceptions:
 - a) The repair/restoration of an organ where no major alterations are made to its location or to the organ case.
 - b) Simple repairs (following Quinquennial inspections) which the inspector (see point 8) considers may be adequately organised by the parish.
 - c) Acquisition of small items such as communion plate, but the DAC may advise a parish to consult their architect about the design of such items.
 - d) The sale of furniture.
- 4) Terms of engagement between the parish and its architect are to be discussed and agreed between the parties at the commencement of any work for which the architect is to be commissioned and before any fees have been incurred. **Two copies of the Standard Form of Agreement (SFA/99) or Conditions of Engagement (CE/99)** (incorporating Conditions of Appointment) between architect and client, as published by the RIBA, are to be supplied and prepared by the architect and signed by both parties, with each party retaining one copy. Fees may be on the basis of a percentage of the cost of the works, which is usual, or on a time and expenses basis or on a lump sum basis, which is suitable for feasibility studies. Lump sum fees normally require a high level of definition in the scope of work to be carried out. The fees should be fair to both parties and sufficient to ensure that a proper professional service will be provided. For guidance consult the RIBA website at <http://www.riba.org> or write to them at 66 Portland Place, London, W1B 1AD.
- 5) Parishes should be aware that:
 - a) Where other consultants are required their fees are in addition to the architects fees. These may include a quantity surveyor, structural engineer, Health and Safety co-ordinator and landscape architect. Local Authority charges for Planning and Building Regulation submission are normally paid directly by the parish.
 - b) Allowances should be made for VAT payable at the current rate on fees and on most types of building work. Where the church is listed, VAT may be reimbursed on eligible work and fees through the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme.
 - c) A "Fixed Price" contract does not necessarily mean there will be no increases in costs. Variations may occur in relation to unforeseen

additional work. Such increases will reflect in the VAT payable and architects fees.

- d) Once an architect has been commissioned or undertaken work on behalf of the parish, fees are payable and if his appointment is terminated abortive fees are likely to be charged, even if no building work has been done.
- e) Before any work is undertaken, the EIG (or other insurers if the parish is not part of the Diocesan group insurance scheme) must formally be advised about the proposed work. In many cases a small additional premium will be payable.

This advice and information is given in good faith and is based on our understanding of the current law. The DAC cannot accept any responsibility whatsoever for any errors or omissions which may result in injury, loss or damage including consequential or further loss. It is the responsibility of the PCC to ensure that it complies with its statutory obligations.