

# Preparing for your Building Project



## Introduction: Church Buildings

The Parish Church and other Church buildings fulfill a number of functions and roles.

- The Church is a building which visibly proclaims a message telling of the existence and local presence of God.
- It is a public building, seen by the public and used by the public. It is an important and significant building; perhaps representing important elements in the community's history and culture.
- It will be used by the public for "Occasional Offices" - weddings/funerals - and sometimes for other civic events and celebrations.
- It is the place where the Church people of the day meet for worship and fellowship, and it provides the background and base for the Church's work.
- It is a resource for people's private prayer, devotion and spirituality.
- It is a centre for teaching the Faith and can also be an aid in this teaching.
- It will generally be a pleasant place to spend time: an 'attraction' in an area or place which is unattractive or mundane.

Churches are the responsibility of Incumbents and Churchwardens, who hold them in trust for future generations.

The Church will have been there before today's generation and will remain long after. The use, alteration and care to which it is subject is more than the simple concern of one particular person, group of people or generation.

## Preliminary Work - aims and objectives

- a. Consider the need for a Feasibility Study
- b. Consider establishing a Property Committee
  - preferably chaired by a Churchwarden
  - Incumbent to be a member

c. Define the precise nature of project

- establish goals and criteria
- consider ideas and aspirations
- draw conclusions
- list options

## Preliminary Work – finding partners

Determine extent of linking with possible interested parties such as:

- Ecumenical:** specific requirements of other churches degree of involvement financial/legal implications
- Social Services:** specific requirements, financial commitment,
- Educational Establishments:** specific needs, system of funding, use of consultants
- Health Authority:** statutory requirements, shared facilities
- Libraries/Sport/Leisure:** is there a need for local facilities, grant aid, showers/washing facilities, space standards, may need Environmental Health/Health and Safety consultants
- Housing:** legal restrictions, land values, contact with housing associations
- Commercial eg refreshment outlet, bookshop:** accommodation needs, legal and financial terms of agreement

## 3. Forming a Brief

a. **Worship and Allied Activities:**

Note: Time and care must be given to the planning of worship space and ministry to total society.

- Sunday and Festival Worship (*remember the big occasions - funerals etc*):**
  - numbers attending, seating (including in the sanctuary)
  - space required for liturgy, choir, circulation
  - type of pulpit, font and lectern need due regard
- Weekday Worship and Occasional Offices**
  - type and number of services, private prayer, meditation
  - reservation of sacrament
  - self-contained space

iii. **Drama, Dance, Music:**

- relationship between performance and audience
- specialist requirements - space, sound, light, changing rooms etc

iv. **Counselling/Confessions:**

- within main body of church or vestry, office, ancillary accommodation?

v. **Robing/Storage:**

- size of vestries
- storage of garments and artifacts
- care and washing of sacred vessels
- safe storage of valuable documents and money

vi. **Administration:** where should this take place

b. **Educational, Recreational, Social Activities:**

i. **Informal Meetings:**

ii. **Large-scale activities - active:**

iii. **Large-scale activities - sedentary:**

iv. **Teaching Rooms:**

v. **Other Meeting Rooms:**

- size and number of groups requiring facilities

vi. **Specialist Activities:**

- organisations using building
- need for storage of special equipment
- tourism potential

c. **Ancillary Activities**

i. **Catering and Refreshment Facilities:**

- scale and type of facilities offered (Note: statutory requirements/licensing)

ii. **Lavatories:**

- centralised or split
- special requirements, eg disabled, children, babychanging

iii. **Changing Rooms:**

- separation of sexes
- need for showers/washing

iv. **Storage:**

- list equipment/items to be stored - dimensions and method of storage
- need for security

v. **Mechanical/Electrical Plant:**

- type of heating
- type of ventilation if required
- position of meters
- fuel storage
- electrical provision, including emergency lighting/fire protection

vi. **Staff Residential Accommodation:**

- demand and specific requirements

## 4. **Administrative Criteria**

a. **Adaptability:**

- Estimated needs of next generation
- Changes in liturgy
- Pastoral development

b. **Circulation:**

- Need for formal processions
- Movement from vestry to worship space

c. **Disabled access:**

- Use without undue difficulty/embarrassment
- Local regulations re type/standard of provision
- Necessity for different floor levels and means of getting between them.

d. **Determine extent of linking with possible interested parties such as:**

i. **Opening Hours:**

- structured events/informal activity
- need for secure areas
- need for reception
- need for emergency escape

ii. **Use of Spaces:**

- multi-use of same space
- subdivision of space

### iii. Administration/Caretaking:

- how building is opened up/closed down
- security consideration:
  - alarms
  - lighting
  - fire precautions

## 5. Consultation

- a. The essence of the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules is early consultation with the DAC on outline proposals. Consider making an 'Application for Preliminary Advice'.
- b. Now is the time to consult your Architect who will apply structural and technical considerations to your entire proposals.

You should determine at the outset the fee basis

- percentage of total cost
- hourly rate
- expenses included or extra
- any other extras eg interior design

Consult the congregation and wider church community on the draft proposals.

- d. Proceed to wider consultation with all relevant interested parties:
  - English Heritage or other appropriate amenity society
  - Insurers
  - Commonwealth War Graves Commission
  - Police
  - Fire Authority
  - Church Commissioners
  - English Nature
  - Local Planning Authority

## 6. Development Plan

- a. Outline time scale and fund-raising
- b. Consider need for special groups to determine:
  - i. Fabrics
  - ii. Furnishings
  - iii. Fund-raising

It is advisable to keep copies of any plans;  
it will save future costs on surveys and measurements.