



THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

Diocese of Chester

Permission for installing telephone lines through churchyards

Responding to urgent requests from churches for Internet access

During the Coronavirus lockdown many clergy have been live-streaming services from their homes, and there is evidence that completely new audiences have been reached through live streaming. As churches open up again, clergy should be able to live stream services from inside church buildings, there may still be many church members who need to remain self-isolated in the interim.

A number of requests have been received by the office of the Diocesan Advisory Committee for consent to lay telephone cables either via underground or overhead cabling through churchyards. Works of this nature would normally require Faculty consent. However, given the clear missional and pastoral benefits to churches being able to live stream in this way, the Diocesan Chancellor has responded with a practice direction.

The practice directions lays out the circumstances in which it will no longer be required to seek Faculty consent for a new telephone line for provision of broadband, provided a short process is followed, including consultation with the office of the DAC. The DAC will need to see the proposed route of the telephone line, where and how it is to enter the building, and the depth of any associated excavations in the churchyard.

Photographs and a plan should be provided to help illustrate the proposed works. Proposals should avoid digging and drilling as far as possible. Telecoms cables are low-powered and present no hazard. The use of an armoured cable may mean the cable can be laid at a very shallow depth without risk of damage. Please send details to:

caroline.hilton@chester.anglican.org or katy.purvis@chester.anglican.org

The text of the practice direction follows, together with a pro forma undertaking to be sent in with all applications.



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In the Consistory Court in the Diocese of Chester

Practice Direction: Installation of Broadband in Churches

1. List A currently permits the installation of a wireless router inside a church but does not cover the installation of a telephone line through the churchyard. Until further notice the installation of a telephone line will not require an application for a faculty if the following conditions are met:-
 - (a) The DAC is informed in writing (which includes by email) of the proposed installation and when the work is to be carried out
 - (b) The DAC archaeology adviser (in cases concerned with laying cable underground) and one of the DAC architects are consulted on the work and provided with what they accept is sufficient information on which to give their advice, the details of which can be agreed between the DAC and the applicant and their approval to the proposed work is obtained. In the event of a failure to agree, the matter should be referred to the Chancellor.
 - (c) The route of any underground telephone line should avoid any known graves and/or memorials, be of shallow depth and avoid deep drilling.
 - (d) If the work uncovers any articulated human or archaeological remains, they will cease and the DAC Secretary, archaeology advisor and the Registry will be informed.
2. Before the work begins the incumbent/churchwarden shall send to the Registry, and copied to the DAC, a written (which includes by email) confirmation that the requirements set out above have or will be adhered to (see Proforma Annexed to this Practice Direction).
3. The Parish will notify the Registry and the DAC when the work is complete.
4. This Direction is effective from 7 August 2020.

His Honour Judge David Turner QC, Chancellor of the Diocese of Chester



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Annex to the Practice Direction

**UNDERTAKINGS ON BEHALF OF THE PCC/INCUMBENT BEFORE TELEPHONE LINES
ARE INSTALLED**

Name of Parish:.....

Completed by:.....

I undertake on behalf of the Parish that I have complied with or will comply with the following requirements:

For all installations whether overhead or underground

1. Agreement with the DAC advisers was reached on 20.....
2. The work is due to begin on 20.... . The Registry has been informed of the date and shall be informed if that date is changed.
3. A full record of the works will be maintained.
4. The Parish will notify the Registry and the DAC office when the work is completed.

For installation of cabling underground

5. The DAC archaeology advisor has been informed of the date and shall be informed if that date is changed.
6. The route of the telephone line avoids any known graves and/or memorials, is of shallow depth and avoids deep drilling.
7. On being informed that the work has uncovered any articulated human or archaeological remains, the work will cease, and the DAC Secretary, DAC archaeology advisor and the Registry shall be informed.

Signature:.....

Date:.....

(Please send to the Registry and a copy to the DAC)