



DAC Guidance

Church Noticeboards

External noticeboards can decay or become out-of-date with unwelcome speed, and for most PCCs their replacement is a regular task and expense. The DAC (Diocesan Advisory Committee) has prepared the following guidelines to help parishes get the best possible results, both visually and financially.

IS A FACULTY NECESSARY FOR CHANGES?

EXISTING BOARDS OR SIGNS If you are planning to repaint or renovate your current board or sign, there will be no need for a faculty provided:

- i) you use the same colour (if it is painted) and finish (if oiled or waxed); and
- ii) the only alteration to the text will be to change the details of an office holder or times of service.

NEW BOARDS OR SIGNS If you are installing a new board or sign you will need a faculty. The DAC will be very happy to advise on the type, size and wording, and if necessary to pay a visit to look at the location you are planning. You will need to obtain a DAC certificate to support the faculty petition.

MATERIALS AND DESIGN

A well worded and designed noticeboard will be an asset to the parish; poor design will simply detract from its original purpose. There are many points to take into account:-

PURPOSE Before designing a new sign or noticeboard, the PCC should decide what it wishes to achieve. Would a simple sign with the title of the church be enough? Or is a multi-purpose information board, providing details about clergy and services as well as seasonal notices, more appropriate?

LOCATION The board or sign must be sited where it will be both legible and complementary to the appearance of the building and its setting. If it is designed to be visible from any road, care should be taken to locate and angle it in relation to road signs or hazards.

If the church is listed and/or in a conservation area, local authority planning regulations may apply (see below). In rare cases involving historic churchyards, depending upon the depth and extent of any digging work, there may even be the need for archaeological consultation.

MATERIAL A range of materials is possible, including wood, brass, bronze, stainless steel, cast or occasionally wrought iron, aluminium and acrylic. The DAC's preferred option is a traditional wooden board. However, depending upon the site and any particular problems (eg exposure to weathering, vandalism or poor lighting) other materials will be considered. Where steel or aluminium is used it may be appropriate for the appearance to be softened by a painted or powder-coated finish.

SIZE The size should be appropriate to the purpose and setting. Dimensions can be affected by the amount of text and whether it is to be displayed in a "portrait" or "landscape" format.

TEXT As a general rule, it is always best to make the text clear and to the point and with as few unnecessary details as possible.

Text on solid wooden boards can be incised and/or painted (the addition of painting makes the wording more legible). Framed boards (either wood or metal) offer coloured acrylic, felt or pinboard interior panels with vinyl lettering. Interchangeable self-adhesive letters fitting into grooved board can be provided for regularly changing sections.

The most legible combination for any text is black lettering on a white or cream background, or white on dark blue, dark green or black. Gold letters are not easily read.

TYPEFACE A typeface should be complementary both to the type of board and to the overall setting.

LIGHTING Solid boards will rely on external lighting, and it is helpful to site them near a lamp post so that they can be read at night. Framed noticeboards, whether wooden or metal, can be illuminated internally. Acrylic signs can also be back-lit although the effect would normally only be suitable for a modern church in an urban setting.

MAINTENANCE Weathering and maintenance should be borne in mind when the board is designed. Some features – such as using metal at the base of wooden supports – can add considerably to its lifespan.

THE FACULTY PROCESS

Please refer to the DAC information – Applications for Faculties – for the process.

To obtain a DAC certificate, you will need to prepare details of your proposals and these should cover the points above. Photographs to illustrate the setting is always of great help.

Once you have both a PCC resolution and a DAC certificate, you can submit your formal faculty petition. (NB A faculty may include any number of items and if you can combine several items at once this will save on the cost of faculty fees.)

LOCAL AUTHORITY REQUIREMENTS

It is sensible to discuss your proposals with your local planning department, particularly if the sign or board is to be placed outside a listed building or where the location is within a Conservation Area. In any case the DAC will wish to know of any comments made by the planning department.

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