



How to ...

Work out if you need a faculty

This guide aims to help your church to discern whether the work you're planning requires a faculty from the Diocese. If you do, it guides you in what you need to do next.

What is a faculty?

A faculty is a licence to carry out work to your church building/s. The faculty jurisdiction is the Church of England's regulation of works to church buildings, their contents and churchyards. It ensures that churches are properly cared for, and that whatever is done to them is properly considered beforehand and carried out in the most appropriate way. The system recognises that churches are living buildings, many of which are of great historic significance but all of which exist for the worship of God and the mission of the wider Church.

How do we find out if we need a faculty for our church project?

Some repair and maintenance works can be done without a faculty or consultation, and others simply require the Archdeacon to confirm in writing that a faculty is not needed. These works are defined in the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules: [List A](#) (table 1) covers works that may be undertaken without the need for consultation, and [List B](#) (table 2; page 18) covers works that may be undertaken without a faculty subject to consultation (ie an Archdeacon's written permission). Many repairs and routine maintenance works are included in these lists.

To apply for a List A or B permission, simply register for an account with the national Online Faculty System. Select 'Applicant' when asked for 'Role', and then follow the steps under the 'Applications' tab: <https://facultyonline.churchofengland.org>.

If the proposed works do not appear on either of these lists, then a faculty is required. If you are in doubt, please do contact the Secretary to the DAC, Emma Bakewell:

emma.bakewell@bristoldiocese.org.

For further information, consult this helpful flow chart that outlines the steps in discerning whether a faculty is needed.

How do we go about applying for a faculty?

To apply for a faculty, visit the Online Faculty System and register for an account, as outlined above: <https://facultyonline.churchofengland.org>.

The first stage in obtaining a faculty is to seek advice from the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC). DAC members have a range of expertise covering building conservation, archaeology etc. This expertise is freely available, and parishes should contact the DAC at the earliest stage to enable the Committee's advice to be included in the project planning. Discussions can also include other bodies such as the Church Buildings Council, Historic England, the National Amenity Societies (such as the Victorian Society, Historic England etc) and your local authority.

Once the DAC has considered the proposal formally, it will issue a "notification of advice". This is sent to your parish accompanied by a public notice, which must be displayed for 28 days, giving parishioners and others the opportunity to make representations.

The second stage is for your parish to petition for a faculty, by sending your faculty form to the Diocesan Registrar together with information about the proposals, such as plans, specifications and the PCC resolution. In cases that are uncontroversial, the faculty will be issued shortly afterwards, sometimes with some conditions. If the work is controversial or involves the “change of character” of a listed church, the Registrar will send notifications to various advisory bodies, if they have not already commented.

If there is a dispute, i.e. an objection from a parishioner or an advisory body, the Chancellor, who is the judge of the Diocesan Consistory Court, must determine the petition. Generally, this will be on the basis of the papers already submitted, but occasionally a formal court hearing is necessary. As this is a Diocesan court, this meeting will take place at the church and not in a court of law.

If there is an emergency which requires urgent work, please contact the Diocesan Registrar immediately: Janet Saxon can be reached on 01749674747, or janet.saxon@harris-harris.co.uk

Funding the work

Having completed the process above and secured a faculty for your church project you also need to consider how the works will be funded. The good news is that there are many channels of support to help you to resource your church project.

The Diocesan website has dedicated pages with fundraising advice for churches here: www.bristol.anglican.org/fundraising

These pages include:

- ‘How to...’ guides to help you to plan and fundraise for your church project:
 1. [How to... fundraise for your project](#):

This is clear, practical guidance on identifying the most appropriate funders, and writing a concise cover letter, a clear statement of need and completing application processes correctly;
 2. [How to... develop a fundraising strategy](#):

For larger, more complex projects it is important to develop and communicate a funding plan. This guide takes you through this process step-by-step, and helps you to implement the plan once it's developed.
- National and Diocesan Funding Guides:
 1. [Diocesan Funding Guide](#): This is a one-stop-shop listing funders of church buildings and projects across the Diocese of Bristol.
 2. [National Funding Guide](#): This Charitable Grants for Churches guide lists a selection of funders that support church projects nationwide.
- The website also signposts links to further advice and support, including fundraising consultants, and regular workshops and events for parishes.

Please contact the Giving and Resources Adviser on 0117 9060100 if you would like to discuss funding options for your project.

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