

Questions PCC should ask architects/surveyors

To try and help PCCs avoid confusion and misunderstanding, here is a list of questions which is suggested as a basis for finding out more about the architect/surveyor and the cost of her/his professional services.

There are only suggestions, but it is hoped that these will give the PCC a confident base-line from which to approach sometimes rather sensitive issues.

a. About Professional Indemnity Insurance

- What is the name of your Professional Indemnity Insurer?
- What is the policy number, renewal date and limit of indemnity?
- What type of policy is it and is there an excess?
- Are there any restrictive clauses?

b. About the Quinquennial Inspection and Report

- Does your Report cover all the areas and provide the information as set out in the Church Buildings Council's *A guide to church inspection and repair*?
- The fee is fixed by the Diocese but does the architect/surveyor expect to be paid extra to discuss questions/queries arising from it?
- Where do you travel from and what will the costs of that travel add to fees?

c. About architectural services generally

- On what basis will the architect's fee be calculated e.g. percentage of total cost of works or on a rate per hour basis
- What is the percentage fee?
- What is the rate for time charge?
- What services does the fee cover?
- Do fees include out of pocket expenses and, if not, what are considered to be out of pocket expenses and how are they charged?
- Are fees and expenses subject to VAT?
- Are fees charged for initial consultations?
- How are fees to be calculated if a project is aborted before completion?
- Are additional fees incurred for amendments/revisions to design proposals once these have been drawn up in detail?
- Does the fee include:
 - i. liaison with the DAC, English Heritage, Planning Authority etc.?
 - ii. assistance with grant applications, insurance notification etc.?

d. About particular projects

- What are the Health and Safety implications of this work?

- Do the Construction and Design (CDM) Regulations apply to this work?
- Does the fee include the services of a Planning Supervisor; if not, will the Planning Supervisor charge an additional fee?
- What other professional disciplines are likely to be involved and what are their fees e.g. structural engineer, heating/lighting consultants, quantity surveyor, archaeologist, conservators, etc?
- When will fees be invoiced?
- What happens if the project is to be grant aided by Heritage Lottery Fund?
- If in the course of works additional work is found to be necessary, how will the fees for this be calculated?
- What are the contract conditions on which the work will be let?
- Has the contractor confirmed that their own insurance policy fully protects their responsibilities?

NB: The PCC should advise their insurers of the works to obtain confirmation of cover to protect their responsibilities under contract.

The responsibility for Quinquennial Inspections and works to church buildings rests with PCCs. Make sure the architect/surveyor you appoint is an appropriate person for YOUR parish church and is someone with whom your PCC can communicate and trust.

Don't be afraid to ask – it's the duty of your professional advisor to make clear what service they are providing.