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Diocesan Advisory Committee
for the Care of Churches

MAINTAINING THE RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR ARCHITECT OR SURVEYOR

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1. Working Relationship

- 1.1 A good working relationship with you architect / surveyor is invaluable in adequately caring for the church building.
- 1.2 Hidden in the construction of our churches is the wisdom of many ages and techniques not often found in our houses. A word with the architect / surveyor, even on what may seem to be a very minor matter, will draw in and on their expert knowledge of the building and prevent mistakes being made.
- 1.3 The architect is also aware of the process for obtaining a faculty to undertake work under the Care of Churches and Faculty Jurisdiction Measure 1991 and of consulting the statutory authorities which have a right to be consulted, e.g. English Heritage.

2. Repairs and Alterations

- 2.1 The Quinquennial Inspection Survey Report: -

- Tells you what needs doing **in order of priority**
- **Does not** tell you how to do it
- **Does not give you authority to proceed with the work**

All repairs specified in the report therefore need, in addition, an architect /surveyor's **specification** before they can be carried out. It is at this point that trouble so often begins. Parishes know a local builder (who has always done work for the church) and they resent paying fees for what looks like a "simple job".

- 2.2 The Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) will ask for an architect / surveyor's specification when the PCC applies for either Minor Works Authorisation from the Archdeacon or a Notification of Advice from the DAC ahead of seeking a faculty from the Chancellor for the repair work. Each item may cost a few pounds now, but in the long run it may save the PCC thousands.
- 2.3 The smaller things are usually those that trip us up!
- 2.4 Re-pointing may seem easy enough – anyone can do it! Get the mortar mix too hard and a few frosts later the bricks and stones themselves begin to break up. Block up a vent that seems to be causing a draught and you may create the right conditions for dry rot. Simple mistakes on the grounds of short term cost savings with expensive consequences later!

3. New work

- 3.1 New work is a different subject for both the parish and architect / surveyor and it is an area of work in which their partnership is often seen at its best.
- 3.2 It is also in this field that the role of the architect / surveyor is seen most clearly in contrast to that of the good builder. They: -
 - Are briefed, or compile a brief together with the parish members, and respond to that brief
 - Design, taking into account the surrounding buildings, planning needs and regulations
 - Prepare production drawings, specify materials and their use
 - Advise on the need for other consultants and/or specialists
 - Set up a building contract

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- Visit the site, as appropriate, to inspect the progress and quality of work
- Administer the terms of the building contract
- Generally look after the PCC's interests

3.3 The architect / surveyor who is engaged to design a new hall or re-design the church's interior need not be the same as the one who carries out the Quinquennial Inspection. Architects and surveyors understand this well since a wide variety of skills are needed for their work and the PCC may need to choose someone who has a particular flair for a particular task. However, it is both good manners and good practice to let your regular architect / surveyor know what you are hoping to do and assess their feelings before bringing in another professional – even if, as HLF grant applications now require the PCC goes through a competitive tendering process to appoint the architect / surveyor for the new work to be done.

4. Interior Alterations

- 4.1 **Re-ordering, re-wiring, re-decorating and new heating installations should not be done**, without informing your architect / surveyor and inviting their comments. The DAC, when considering a Minor Works / Certificate application for the work, will wish to note that your architect / surveyor has been consulted even if they do not fully direct the work.
- 4.2 **Re-ordering** is a skilled job for which the DAC expects architect / surveyor's drawings. It often involves new furniture and the re-location of pulpits, lecterns, fonts and pews. An **architect / surveyor's eye is essential**.
- 4.3 If structural work is involved, it may be wise to discuss with your architect / surveyor necessary direction and, at the same time, negotiate a sensible fee. They do not have to set fees as a percentage of the overall costs and can be engaged on an hourly basis or whatever seems appropriate to the task.
- 4.4 **Re-decorating** needs your architect's advice on two counts: - firstly, materials, and secondly, colour scheme. (See Advisory Note: Re-decorating your Church).
- 4.5 More damage has been done to churches in recent years by the DIY enthusiast with a paintbrush than in any other field. Churches cannot and must not be treated like your home. They behave differently, are usually of traditional construction and have more variable and extreme temperature and moisture conditions.
- 4.6 Changes of colour call for an artist's eye, especially if they are to enhance the building and its worship. Architects / surveyors should be consulted about colour changes and paint materials.
- 4.7 **Re-wiring** can also include **Re-lighting** and, like re-decorating, can have an enormous effect upon the visual appearance of the church. Good lighting is not easy to achieve and requires special skills and a lighting designer may, in the long run, save the PCC both time and expense. Likewise, cabling and trunking can be very unsightly and a plethora of holes in the fabric of the church building are not desirable. (See Advisory note: Lighting and Re-wiring).
- 4.8 A **new heating system** usually means new fittings. Heating appliances have never been glamorous and great care has to be taken not only to achieve an efficient system for your congregation but one that is aesthetically acceptable. This is what your architect / surveyor is trained to do. They may well wish to work with a heating engineer who will offer technical advice but they will want to advise about the siting and concealment of heaters. Satisfactory heating often depends upon it looking good as well as feeling good. (See Advisory note: Heating your Church).

- 4.9 The installation of **carpets** should be done with great care and in consultation with your architect. On **no** account should one be laid that has a 'non-breathing' backing.
- 4.10 **ALL THESE ALTERATIONS REQUIRE A FACULTY.**

5. The Key

- 4.1 The key to good care of your buildings is undoubtedly a sound working relationship with your architect / surveyor. Although inspecting architects / surveyors are only appointed for each inspection (but see the Advisory Note: Appointing an Architect or Surveyor), there is much to be said for keeping the same person year by year. This makes the planning of the programme of work over a number of years much easier and establishes the sort of professional relationship that can be both helpful and creative.
- 4.2 Not only that, but in inspecting the church, the architect / surveyor "learns" a great deal about its history and its problems, and tries to see every part of it., even if access is awkward. Such knowledge as is then acquired will be added to by the same architect at each inspection and during the execution of any work in the intervening years. **Think of your architect / surveyor as your church's GP.**
- 4.3 The Quinquennial Inspection Report writer will have a balanced and intimate knowledge of the whole church and we do strongly encourage that this same writer is used as the architect who administers the repairs - but see the Advisory Note: Appointing an Architect or Surveyor.
- 4.4 **If, however, the PCC is dissatisfied with the architect / surveyor, it can appoint a new one (with the DAC's consent) but please remember to write a courteous note of thanks to your previous architect** See the Advisory Note: Appointing an Architect or Surveyor for information on how best to make an appointment,
- 4.5 The care of a church building is a complex matter and specialist equipment (like bells and organs, or ancient materials, stained glass, silver, or ancient monuments) requires specialist knowledge. Your architect is one of the experts we need for that care and they will know the names of other experts they can call on to assist them in the work.
- 4.6 Remember, finally, that although most church architects / surveyors try to keep their fees to a minimum, time is money, and indecision by PCCs can result in many hours of, perhaps, unnecessary repetitive discussion for them. Also, parish meetings are usually held in the evenings or weekends outside office hours. So make sure, as a matter of courtesy, that they are asked to arrive at the time they are required on the agenda.

Please take good care of your architect / surveyor to help them to take care of the church!