

Faculty Petition – Completion Guidance Notes

This commentary is to help you to complete the Petition. It is numbered to match the page or section in the petition.

Page 1 Details of Petitioners

If there is no minister, two churchwardens may be petitioners. One churchwarden and the secretary of the parochial church council may be petitioners but not one churchwarden alone. A local authority or other body may be a petitioner when appropriate.

Please include a daytime telephone number and a regularly used email address if one is available.

Page 2 Schedule of Works or Proposals

This needs to be carefully completed as instructed on the form, **NOT** on a separate sheet, because the Faculty will follow the wording used.

You need to describe exactly what you plan to do. Write down only as much as you absolutely have to, and use any supporting plans, maps or pictures to speak for themselves. For example, you might need to say: “Install new two-light stained glass window in the northwest nave corner window, to the design shown in the accompanying cartoon number A1 from Joe Bloggs Stained Glass Company”, or “Create new cremated remains area 3 metres by 4 metres in the south east corner of the churchyard according to the accompanying churchyard map”.

On large projects, you may need to refer to a number of architect’s plans and drawings by number (all the drawings will have a unique number). You will also need to refer to the architect’s specification, so the description may say something like “Replace nave roof and re-point tower according to drawings FB12645, FB14763 and FB59685; and architect Fred Bloggs’ Specification for Roof and Tower repairs”.

Some churches occasionally put a number of projects forward on a single faculty application. You can still do this if all the projects are linked in some way. For example, if you are planning to move the organ from the chancel to the west end of the nave because you are creating a meeting room where it used to be, keep it all on one application. But if you want (say) to move the baptismal font, and fix dry rot in the roof, use two separate forms. The reason for this is that with unrelated issues the DAC’s response may differ in each case (the Committee may quickly recommend the dry rot work, but not the proposal to move the font). It doesn’t cost the parish any money for a faculty so it won’t make any difference to you.

Page 3 Questions

Time spent on answering the questions in accordance with the instructions will assist the processing of your petition.

Please keep a copy of this section as it will be useful for future occasions.

Section (A) Information about your church

The church grounds, or an object in the grounds, such as a medieval preaching cross, may be a Scheduled Ancient Monument. If you are not sure and want to check, a register of Scheduled Ancients Monuments, the contact details may be found on page 2 of the list of Useful Addresses.

A 'Statement of Significance' should tell the story of the church through its history on about one, but certainly not more than two, sides of A4 paper. Please see page 2 of **The Faculty Process**.

You should cover the following three topics: -

1. Setting the Scene:

Briefly lay out the story of the church's past, and what it is now. When it was first built, what there was of it, how it has developed, and what it is like now. Did the Victorians have a go at restoring it? Don't forget to mention the surroundings of the church – did it originate in a small village that has been overtaken by a large town? Has a medieval village disappeared leaving the church in the middle of a field? Don't forget that the people who will read this document may not have seen the church so it is important to paint as vivid a picture as you can. A plan of the church and churchyard is essential.

2. Description

A short description of the general character of the church, and the basic plan and dates of the building and its major elements. When writing this it is useful to refer to 'The Buildings of Warwickshire' or 'The Buildings of Leicestershire and Rutland' (as appropriate) by N. Pevsner, the relevant Victorian County History (in your local large library), and any other guidebooks you may have.

3. Items of Special Significance

Any feature of the church that is unusual. The description in Pevsner's book will make mention of any particular feature (such as stained glass, furniture or other fixtures and fittings). The 'list description' of the building will also refer to any outstanding features. Don't forget to include any important historical associations, even if there are no artefacts.

Architects Under the 1955 Inspection of Churches Measure, the PCC is obliged to appoint an architect or surveyor who will undertake the church's Quinquennial Inspection. The PCC is not obliged to use that same person to oversee any other repairs or works that need to be undertaken. If the PCC decides to use a different person for a particular project, however, the PCC should be able to say clearly and succinctly why it is planning to use them. Do they have particular demonstrable skills appropriate to the particular project? Architects who work on listed buildings should be able to demonstrate that they have the necessary skills and background.

Please note: As from December 2003, if the works are likely to be grant aided by English Heritage, your architect **must** be on the Architects Accredited in Building Conservation (AABC) Register or the grant monies will not be forthcoming. Contact details for the AABC Register are on page 2 of the list of Useful Addresses.

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Section (B) Changes to the interior and/or exterior of the church

A 'Statement of Needs' is an explanation of why you want to make the changes, and will show that the church has thought through the consequences of the change both to the building and the people that worship there. Please see page 2 of **The Faculty Process**.

It should cover the following topics: -

1. Current and future needs of the congregation and parish

Starting with a description of the character of the parish both in terms of the worshipping community and the wider neighbourhood, identify what their needs are, and how the changes are going to meet them. Wherever possible the needs should be specific, realistic and have sufficient detail to allow an informed assessment to be made. For example, an extension to the church is needed because a new housing estate has been built in the village and space is needed for a church based weekday toddler group; a parish office is needed for the new parish administrator; Sunday School has grown to 50 children currently accommodated in the vestry.

2. Impact on the building

This should be a sensible and well-thought-out assessment of what effect the changes will have on the building. It is important to make a candid assessment, as this will allow the church a greater chance of getting the scheme approved, even if the changes are quite radical. If the presentation dismisses or minimises problems, it will be difficult for any reader to believe that the PCC has really thought the project through.

3. Evidence of communication and support

You should explain what measures have been taken to ensure that both the church community and wider community have been made aware of the plans, what efforts have been made to listen to their opinions, and how the PCC plans to tackle any objections (that is, will you modify your scheme in the light of critical comments, or if that isn't possible or desirable, how you plan to communicate that to the objectors). This isn't about the PCC resolution from the meeting at which the changes were agreed, which also has to be produced (Section (S)).

This 'Statement of Needs' may be quite a large document if you have a major re-ordering, or something like the addition of a church extension in mind, but you need to keep it as short as you can whilst giving a full picture, including evidence of appropriate consultation.

Section (C) Partial Demolition or Demolition

If this section is applicable, you should ask the church's architect or surveyor to help you complete it.

Section (D) Financial Information

The information under question 10 is required to help the Chancellor or Archdeacon to decide whether there should be a condition in the Faculty as to phasing of work to match the timing of the availability of funds. Because grant making bodies usually attach conditions to grants for repairs or other work, the information under questions 11 to 13 is required to ensure that the Faculty is consistent with the terms of any grant. In question 11(a) "a grant in

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the past” should be treated as referring to a grant within a period of 10 years prior to the petition unless you know that the terms of an earlier grant apply to the work now proposed.

Section (E) Permissions from other bodies

A Faculty cannot override the requirements of general legislation, so it is necessary to have answers to these questions. Your answer to question 17(b) may not reflect the view of the Diocesan Advisory Committee. Seeking advice from English Nature may therefore be a sensible precaution.

Section (F) Archaeological matters

If this section is applicable, you should ask the church’s architect or surveyor to help you complete it.

Archaeologists are particularly interested in any works that will disturb the ground. If your plans include the digging of new trenches to lay in services (water, gas, power), or foundations for a new building, they will certainly have to be consulted. They will also be interested if the fabric of the building is affected, particularly if it is very old, and shows evidence of changing use or structural modification over the years.

Any archaeological conditions that are needed will feature on the DAC Certificate and will be self-explanatory. If you want to talk about archaeology at the outset of your project, please ring the DAC Secretary who will put you in contact with the DAC Archaeological Advisor.

Section (G) Consultation for works of alteration to the exterior or interior of a listed church

The notes on the faculty process explain the range of bodies to be consulted and their addresses are on the list of Useful Addresses.

The DAC tries to broker a single meeting with all the interested groups at the church during this stage in the process, so that a shared understanding of the scheme can be developed.

Please include your Statement of Significance and Statement of Needs with any submission to the Amenity Societies and/or English Heritage etc.

If in doubt, please contact the DAC Secretary.

Section (H) Church Insurance

Nearly all work affects the security of the building, which is the reason for the information requested in questions 21 and 22. Some sad cases of accidental injury to volunteers have necessitated the protection of the PCC against a claim for damages and this is the reason for question 23.

Section (I) Introducing new articles into the church (e.g. furniture, furnishing, fixture or fitting)

If this section is applicable you should ask the contractor or the church’s architect or surveyor to help you with the answer to question 24(b) and (c).

Section (J) Disposal of any item in or belonging to the church

The method of disposal (e.g. sale, gift, loan, destruction etc.) should be considered by the PCC so that you are able to answer this section in full.

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Section (K) Seats in the church

This section only applies where there are private rights conferred by a statute or formal grant.

Section (L) Work to the chancel

The Diocesan Registrar can advise whether there is a Lay Rector with responsibilities for the maintenance of the Chancel.

Section (M) Work affecting monuments etc. in the church

The information in question 28(b) is important because it may need to be attached to the public notice or any advertisement directed by the Chancellor so as to give proper publicity to the proposals.

Section (N) New memorial in the church

Question 29(b) is a reminder that memorials will usually only be permitted in special cases and after the individual has been dead for at least 5 years, and that the PCC has to address the merit of any proposal.

Section (O) Details of Contractors

This information is required both for the record and so that the petitioners can be advised if there is any doubt about the competence of the named contractor(s) to carry out the proposed work.

Section (P) Time for work

This is required to enable an appropriate period of time for completion of the work to be included in the Faculty.

Section (Q) Work in a churchyard or burial ground

The Diocesan Registrar should be able to help you with the answer to question 33(e).

The local planning authority should be consulted in respect of question 33(h).

Section (R) Archdeacon's Licence

You should submit this petition not later than two months before the expiry of the period in the licence.

Section (S) PCC resolution

Where an emergency Faculty is sought, the petition may be submitted before a meeting of the PCC, provided it is supported by a resolution of the standing committee.

Signatures of the Petitioners

These must be hand-written and not typed.

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Checklist page 13

Please use this to check you are enclosing the correct documents needed to support your faculty application as documents from separate sources may get mislaid.

Please note that you will receive the DAC Certificate AFTER the DAC has considered the application and so this can be ignored in the checklist.