

THE PROCEDURE FOR OBTAINING A FACULTY

The faculty petition (application form) is a daunting document and the process may seem complicated. Thank you for your time and effort in preparing an application. I hope that these notes will help.

This is not intended to be a detailed account of the faculty process. Various people will be happy to help, including your archdeacon and the secretary of the Diocesan Advisory Committee (James Halsall or Jessica Parrett telephone 01473 298533). Please also feel free to contact either **me (direct line 01473 406270) or my assistant and registry clerk, Mrs Angela Long, (direct line 01473 406300).**

A useful starting point if you are a newcomer to the process is to read our diocesan booklet "The Care of our Churches and Churchyards". Every parish should have at least one copy and I shall be happy to send more if required.

Consultation

The key to a successful faculty application lies in the preliminary consultation process. The first step is to discuss the initial proposals within the PCC and, unless the work is very straightforward, to instruct your church architect. Informal discussions with the archdeacon and/or the DAC are also well worthwhile at this stage and the DAC will often send a sub-committee to visit the church.

As soon as preliminary drawings have been prepared, you should consider whether you need to consult other bodies. These may include:-

English Heritage

Any body that has previously made a grant to the church

English Nature

A relevant society such as the Victorian Society, the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings or the Council for British Archaeology

Your Insurers

The local authority

The nature of the proposed work or the particular features of the church will determine whom you should consult and my list is not exclusive. You should consult these bodies by letter and send as much detail as possible. In order to put the onus on them to respond, it is useful to conclude your letter with words along the lines of: - "If I do not hear from you to the contrary within the next 28 days, I shall assume that you are happy with these proposals".

English Heritage no longer requires parishes to seek its approval for works on the basis of having received an English Heritage grant before 2002. If a grant has been received since 2002, then English Heritage approval will need to be obtained and a form is enclosed for your use. This rule will cease to apply 10 years after the last grant payment has been received.

The faculty petition

Please do your best with the faculty petition. It was revised in 2000 to ensure that faculty applications are submitted with all the necessary information. Please therefore address all the questions and follow the guidance notes and check list carefully.

The DAC

When you have completed the petition, please submit it, with the items required by the checklist, to **James Halsall at Churchgates House, Cutler Street, Ipswich, IP1 3UQ** for consideration at the next available DAC meeting. These are held roughly every month except in August. If the petition involves significant changes to the church you must display the plans etc. in the church from when you submit the petition to the DAC until the faculty is granted.

The DAC can only make a recommendation. The actual decision on any faculty application is taken either by the chancellor of the diocese (Sir John Blofeld – a High Court Judge) or by the relevant archdeacon. After the DAC meeting, the DAC secretary will issue a certificate to you stating the DAC's opinion. At the same time he will notify me.

- (i) If the certificate is one of recommendation, the DAC secretary will also send you public notices and instructions as to how you should display them;
- (ii) If the certificate does not recommend, I will nonetheless offer you the opportunity to submit your application to the chancellor even though it is not supported by the DAC.

Public notice

The public notice procedure is intended to give parishioners and other interested parties an opportunity of objecting to the proposals. You will be asked to display notices for 28 days and objections may be lodged with me within that period. Sometimes you will be asked to insert a notice in the local newspaper, particularly if a major alteration or extension is proposed.

The faculty

At the same time as you display the notices, I will forward the papers to the chancellor or the relevant archdeacon, as appropriate. If they agree and if there are no objections, I will then issue the faculty to you. The chancellor or archdeacons may impose conditions. Before authorising a faculty, they may also require me to consult other bodies if you have not done so already.

Fees

In this diocese, no fees are charged for processing faculty applications by or on behalf of PCCs. The costs are effectively paid for out of the diocesan quota. It is different with private applications or if people raise objections, and if either case arises, I will explain the position more fully.

Thank you for reading this. We will try to guide you through each stage but, if in doubt, please ask for help.

K/diocese/dio.precs/facultyletter