

New Stained Glass

If you have any questions please contact the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC):

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For more information about the care of churches visit the DAC pages on the Diocese of Manchester's website: www.manchester.anglican.org



Introduction

'Stained glass' is the art of manipulating coloured light within an architectural context. Historically, the medium is one which continually evolves, being based on ancient traditions and way of relating art to architecture.

All applications for new windows are processed through the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) but the final responsibility for approval rests with the Chancellor after he has considered the advice of the Committee. The Committee does not give permission for the work to be carried out.

It is advisable for the PCC to consult the DAC at an early stage when it has decided to install a stained glass window. It then becomes easier for the stained glass artist/craftsman to develop the design in accordance with DAC requirements.

This is not a process that should be seen as limiting the artist's freedom but one offering a constructive framework in which to work.

Requirements for the Definitive Design Sketch

- i. The drawing should be of sufficient size to show detail of its design and construction, including leading.
- ii. It should show saddle bars, which should be no more than 12 to 14 inches apart and be of non-ferrous metal.
- iii. An enlarged section to show detail may occasionally be required to convince the DAC that the finished work will be of a high standard.
- iv. The drawing must be to scale with measurements given.
- v. The sketch should be in colour as near as is reasonably possible to the proposed window glass to give an impression of the finished window.
- vi. In the case of re-used glass, areas of old and new glass should be clearly indicated.
- vii. The design should be as 'final' as possible, though the DAC accepts that some minor modifications may be required during manufacture as the window evolves. Changes should be notified.
- viii. Inscriptions must be included showing the style of lettering indicated at an adequate scale.
- ix. Details of the type of glass to be used must be given and in the case of a window that is to be restored or re-used, an indication of whether the glass is to match existing glass or not.
- x. Details of window protection are required.

Planning a New Stained Glass Window

The final design sketch should have sufficient detail to convince the DAC of its qualities of design and manufacture and the accurate matching of design elements and glass in the case of restored windows.

Whilst smaller in scale than a working cartoon, it should give an accurate picture as possible of the window's final appearance.

- The first consideration is to be sure that a coloured window is the most suitable art work for the church. For instance, a well-designed leaded light might be preferable, or even something entirely different such as a banner.
- The design might be abstract or figurative, but it should exploit the full potential of the medium, materials and techniques and not be simply a picture in a window frame. A written account of the concept behind the design should always accompany a new design sketch. The design might have a discernible spiritual significance or be topical or ephemeral. The account might include comments from the artist, the donor and the PCC, which may assist the DAC to understand the reasons behind the choice of subject matter and the relationship to other glazing in the church.
- A new window should harmonise with the church building. It should respond to the specific architectural opening.
- The specific position of the window should be taken into account. It is important to consider external and internal light sources; whether it will receive bright external light and at what time of day it will be lit and whether there will be glare. Whether there are other windows which might throw reflected light onto the inner surface and how it will be affected at night by electric light.

The degree of transparency is important if trees, monuments etc are outside the window which may affect the colour of the glass or intrude on the design.

Planning a New Stained Glass Window

- The effect of the window on the overall lighting of the building is important. The light level may be inconveniently lowered and features such as sculpture in the vicinity may be less easily seen.
- The style, subject and colour of other stained glass should be acknowledged. However, innovation and new ideas will be welcomed.
- Christian symbolism should follow established forms so that it may clearly express the ideas intended. The iconography should be able to be understood without any accompanying text.

Documentation

A comprehensive guide to what should accompany the application is as follows:

a. **Plan of the Church showing:**

- the proposed position of the window with its dimensions;
- the position of other stained glass windows with names of designers, studios and dates.

b. **Photographs showing:**

- the existing glazing which is to be replaced
- the other stained glass windows in the church, especially those nearby
- in the case of stained glass which is to be reused, the window in its original setting or as stored. The window content (ie design, colour) must be clearly shown.
- previous work by the studio if work has not been submitted to the DAC before, with details of accreditation

c. **Written Account of the concept and inspiration** which has given rise to a new design, or the historical details of 'old' window glass from another building (who made it, date, original placing etc).

d. **Design Sketch Consultation with the DAC** at an early stage may be very helpful. Rough sketches may be submitted in the first stages of development of design and may save time and money later. They must be labelled and dated as such so as to avoid confusion with a later, definitive design submission.