

Architects are highly qualified professional people who have completed at least seven years study and practical training before becoming registered and able to practise as an architect.

Many have additional qualifications, often in conservation of historic buildings, and those who care for our churches are usually members of the EASA (Ecclesiastical Architects and Surveyors Association) and an appropriate body like The Victorian Society.

# The Law

and how it affects your church



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

DAC Secretary (Mrs Christine Marshall)  
Diocesan Office  
5th floor, Church House  
90 Deansgate  
Manchester  
M3 2GH  
Tel: 0161 828 1419  
Fax 0161 833 2751  
Email: [dac@manchester.anglican.org](mailto:dac@manchester.anglican.org)

For more information about the care of churches visit the DAC pages on the Diocese of Manchester's website: [www.manchester.anglican.org](http://www.manchester.anglican.org)

## Background - The Law

The Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1991 came into effect on 1 March 1993 and has had a major impact on Churches, their contents, their churchyards and other land which belongs to them.

The aim was to ensure that churches and everything which belongs to them are properly cared for and that any works proposed are properly considered beforehand so that they may be carried out in the best possible way, in order to safeguard the inheritance of the past whilst meeting the needs of the living Church.

The essence of the new law is to **seek expert advice at an early stage and to consult all those who have an interest in the building.**

Taking these steps will save time, energy and possibly money later.

**Certainly works should not be carried out without a Faculty.**

Such action may result in an Archdeacon seeking an Injunction or Restoration Order to stop or reverse any unauthorised work.

The care and maintenance of all churches is, by law, the responsibility of the churchwardens. In practice the clergy and PCC often participate in this task.

## A Cautionary Tale...

### It all began ...

It all began with a small hole in the roof.

Church members were aware that there were a few slipping tiles but it was not until the buckets were rushed out into the side aisle one rainy afternoon that the PCC realised prompt action should be taken.

With what they thought were good intentions they called in some roofers who did a quick patch repair to the tiling. All was now dry inside the church so nothing more needed to be attended to there.

A few months later, someone noticed a sag in the ceiling, then there were cracks, then partial collapse. Dry rot had broken out and was spreading fast. A large area of the roof structure now needs renewal and the church has a major repair on its hands.

If the church architect had been advised about the hole in the roof in the first place, he could have made an inspection when the ladders were up and spotted the start of the trouble before it sadly escalated.

This is a true story with an unhappy ending, that could have been so different. It should be noted, however, that dry rot can strike so quickly that in another roof the trouble might have begun days after the architect's inspection and not been spotted.

Nevertheless, involvement of your architect at an early stage may well save you from some future problems and expense, if not all.

Stories like this are repeated all too often throughout the Diocese and the purpose of relating this is to try and help incumbents and churchwardens understand better the importance of their architect in caring for their churches and apply "a stitch in time."

## “Anything else I ought to know?”

### Yes!

Every five years a thorough inspection of your church must be undertaken. This is required under the "Inspection of Churches Measure, 1955".

This inspection is called the **Quinquennial Inspection**.

You will receive a reminder from the DAC Secretary when the inspection is due and the ensuing report will be sent to the DAC Secretary with copies forwarded to the incumbent, the PCC Secretary and the Archdeacon.

In the meantime - **Quinquennial work alone will not keep your building in good condition**. The Vicar, PCC and Churchwardens should be vigilant and watch out for things which need routine repair and maintenance.

Missing tiles and slates should be replaced, gutters and downspouts kept clear of leaves and debris.

All damp penetration, signs of fungal growth, rotten wood and mould should be referred immediately to the parish architect.

## “What must we do?”

All work carried out in and around church buildings must have the approval of the Diocesan Chancellor or the Archdeacon.

This includes any changes to a building - any item added to the building, eg furniture, hangings or decorative work - any work in the churchyard eg boundary walls, notice boards.

**No work should be done without this approval or Faculty.**

## “But we know nothing about buildings...”

Don't worry, this is the job of your church architect.

Every church must have an architect appointed from the Diocesan approved list.

Your Archdeacon or DAC Secretary should be consulted about any appointment you wish to make. They will give advice about suitable architects for your particular needs.

If you wish to change your architect, you will need to get DAC approval: a letter to the DAC Secretary will begin this process.

The architect is a skilled professional who will help you protect your building and advise you on its upkeep.

His or her advice should be sought about all but the most minor works on your church building.

The advice of your parish architect is taken very seriously by the DAC.

## “But what advantage is there to me and my parish...?”

The first advantage is that your building will be well cared for in a structured and professional manner.

This will save you money in the long run and will give you the satisfaction that you have been a good steward of your building for the future generations.

But there are other advantages.... for instance, often poor quality items are offered to churches. Pastoral considerations can make it difficult for such a gift to be refused.

The parish can, in such a case, refer the matter to the DAC and the decision-making is taken out of the parish situation.