

13.2 CHURCH FITTINGS, FURNITURE AND ORNAMENTS APPLICATION

The primary concern is to ensure that over the long term the fittings, furniture and ornaments are edifying and assist holy worship and the gathering of the people of God.

Before any fittings, furniture or ornaments of any church are added to, altered or removed, an application is made to the Bishop for approval and the issuing of a Faculty (i.e. permission granted by the Diocesan Bishop to undertake the proposed alterations, additions or removal of items within the church and the grounds).

If the Parish Church is a National, State or Local Government listed Heritage site, there may be additional requirements. Where a Conservation Management Plan is in place the approval of the State Heritage Commissioner may be required, this may include engaging a Heritage Architect to assist with and submit the application. Please feel free to contact the Diocesan Property Services Unit as you proceed with your application.

A Faculty is required if something is being installed, altered or removed and such a change will be long-term (more than 6 months) or have a permanent effect.

A Faculty Application must have the support of the Incumbent and the Parish Council or Parish Resourcing Team. The application should include the best possible information for the Bishop including:

- A comprehensive description and plan of the object/item including full dimensions;
- A photograph, drawing, or artwork of the item; and
- A photograph and plan showing the location in the church building where the item is to be placed.

All Faculty Applications must be signed by the Incumbent, the Parish Council Secretary, and a Churchwarden.

The people of the parish should know that an application is to be made. Information about the proposed change to the fittings, furniture or ornaments should be given by notices as part of worship, in any pew sheets and on one or more internal notice boards regularly convening information, with the guiding principle being that a reasonable person would have known about the proposal. The people of the parish should have at least 14 days to make a submission in writing on the proposal to the Parish Council Secretary.

Following the exhibition period the Parish Council or Parish Resourcing Team must review any submissions which have been received regarding the proposed change and consider whether they still wish to proceed with the Faculty Application in the original form or whether some changes need to be made.

If the Parish Council or Parish Resourcing Team decides to go ahead with the Faculty a copy shall be sent to the Bishop with information about the communication to the parishioners and a summary of any submissions received from parishioners. Copies of the submissions should be kept as the Bishop, or a delegate of the Bishop, may review them.

The Property & Risk Officer (PRO) will review an application to ensure that the proposed works comply with all relevant authorities. The PRO will work with the parish to assist the application to be finalised.

The application once finalised will be submitted to the Assistant Bishop (Inland Episcopate, Coastal Episcopate or Archdeacon of Newcastle) for concurrence and subsequently submitted to the Bishop for approval.

If the Bishop approves the Faculty Application a formal Faculty is prepared and forwarded to the Parish.

Faculty Application to Erect a Memorial

A memorial:

- Is in recognition of someone or some event; and
- Can be an object or item which serves as a focus for memory of someone or an event.

Before any memorial can be placed in or on any part of a church building, a Faculty Application must be applied for by the Parish and issued by the Bishop giving permission for such a memorial.

The details of all donations to the parish in memory of a person or event will be recorded in the Faculty Register of the parish.

No memorial plaques will be authorised except at the Bishop's discretion, where no other option is available.

All donations/gifts become the property of the parish.

Unauthorised Additions, Alterations or Removals

The Bishop in writing may require a Parish Council or Parish Resourcing Team to remove or restore any unauthorised additions, alterations or removals which have been made without receiving the permission of the Bishop.

Faculty Applications will be considered for:

- New liturgical furnishings and vessels;
- Significant and permanent artworks;
- Alteration/removal of current furnishings;
- Changes to fabric and fittings which are subject to the requirements of a conservation management plan;
- The installation of audio and/or visual equipment which can be seen by worshippers.

Faculty applications may not be required for the following but the parish should consult with the PRO:

- Organ
- Floor Coverings

Faculty Applications will not be required for the following:

- Display of temporary artwork (Seasonal)
- Associated essential items such as
 - Piano
 - Robes/Vestments
 - Books

Reviewing Plaques, Honour Boards and other Memorabilia which Recognises Perpetrators

One of the roles of any church building is to tell the story of ministry in its area.

One way we do this is to record the names of people on plaques or honour boards, or to display their picture.

As we have grown to understand the experience of survivors of abuse we have learnt that records of this type can cause survivors great anguish both because item may be a trigger for them, and because it appears as though church is continuing to honour people who have caused them harm.

It is important that Incumbents review carefully the plaques, honour boards, pictures and similar material in their parishes to see if they mention people who

- a) have been found guilty by a court of sexual abuse or serious crime;
- b) have been subject to an adverse finding about sexual abuse or serious misconduct by a Royal Commission, Diocesan Tribunal or Professional Standards Board (or similar body); or
- c) the Diocese has advised, on reasonable grounds, it believes the person engaged in sexual abuse, serious crime or serious misconduct.

The Incumbent should consider what action should be taken and discuss it with the Parish Council.

The process for removing items from church buildings involves the granting of a faculty.

It is important that parishes also have an accessible way of telling their story that allows people to know its history and who has served in the parish. A simple list of incumbents and assistants on their website can be helpful as can a list of former churches of the parish and names by which the parish (or parts of the parish has been known).

Parish Responsibility for Items held under a Faculty should a Worship Centre Close

The procedure to be followed will be according to the Procedure to Close a Centre of Worship at Policy 13.3.

All memorials or gifts to a church in the form of internal fittings or articles are given to the glory of God.

When a church closes as a worship centre and is deconsecrated, all memorials and gifts cannot be returned to the original donors. If they are not required in that parish, suitable steps should be taken to ensure such memorials or gifts can be used in any other church.

Register of Faculties

Each parish must maintain a Register of Faculties which provides details of the item/object of the Faculty, the donor, its use and purpose, and its position in the church. The Register should include details of its location should it be moved, or relocated when a centre closes. **(See Policy 7.2).**

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