

CHANCELLOR'S NOTES FOR PCCs FOR COMMISSIONING OF WORKS OF ART

The following notes guide parishes in the business of obtaining faculties for commissioning works of art, such as stained glass, pictures, statues, plaques and so on.

1. The first step is to discuss both in the PCC and in the parish the form the work should take and to prepare a draft brief (ie a description in words of what is required) for the artist. Choice of suitable artists / craftsmen and finance should be considered. It is essential to consult the Archdeacon and the church architect. The DAC Assistant Secretary, Mrs Sarah Davis, at The Diocesan Registry, 14 Market Place, Wells BA5 2RE (Tel. 01749 674747) may be able to provide details of appropriate artists/craftsmen. It should not normally be necessary to consult the DAC at this stage but, if preliminary informal advice is required on the general feasibility and suitability of the proposal (and the likelihood of its being approved) application should be made to the Assistant Secretary.
2. Once a draft design has the support of the PCC, it should apply to the DAC for preliminary informal advice. The DAC will advise on the satisfactory blending of the new work with existing features of the church. The DAC will also give advance warning of the requirement of drawings, models and so on for the purpose of giving formal approval.
3. After the DAC has been consulted and has agreed the artist should be invited to finalise the design and show it to the PCC with his/her proposal, fully prepared and presented, usually in the form of drawings/ models. The PCC must be satisfied with the proposed design. Modifications can be made at this stage.
4. Once the design has been finalised formal approval must be sought from the DAC. When the DAC has issued a certificate, application for faculty may be made.

Often works of art are intended to commemorate the departed. To allow time for reflection and for constructive thought a faculty should not be sought, in normal circumstances, for at least three years after the death.

The above procedure should result in harmony and co-operation between all parties concerned – PCC, artist and DAC.

In considering a faculty application, the Chancellor will be influenced by the way in which these guidelines have been followed.

T J Briden
September 1999