



St Albans Diocesan Scheme for the Inspection of Churches

INTRODUCTION

Under the provisions of the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction and Care of Churches Measure 2018, as amended by the Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure 2020, referred to hereafter as “the Measure”, all parish churches in the Diocese, all other consecrated churches and chapels including licenced places of worship opted in under paras 38 to 44 of the Measure (previously the Care of Places of Worship Measure 1999), must be inspected at least once in any five-year period.

The PCC is required to appoint a person to inspect the church and make a report on the inspection. In making an appointment the PCC must have obtained and had regard to advice from the DAC on the appointment and be satisfied that the person has the necessary qualifications and experience.

With respect to the inspection and appointment of an inspector the PCC must have regard to any advice from the Church Buildings Council. That national advice is followed and interpreted in that given by the DAC which is tailored specifically for the St Albans Diocese. DAC guidance includes advice leaflets on quinquennial inspections and professional advisers.

THE DIOCESAN SCHEME

- 1 This scheme was established by the Diocesan Synod by a resolution of 12 June 2021 and it supersedes all previous schemes. It comes into operation on 12 June 2021.
- 2 The Scheme shall be administered through the Diocesan Advisory Committee (the DAC). All correspondence concerning matters dealt with under the Scheme should be addressed to the DAC Secretary.
- 3 The fees for the inspection of churches in the Diocese under the terms of this Scheme shall be paid by the Parochial Church Council of each parish in accordance with the following terms of this Scheme.
- 4 Nothing in this Scheme affects the legal responsibility of every PCC for the proper care of each church under its authority, and its duty to apply for a Faculty or for permission under Schedule 1 of the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2015 (as amended by the Faculty Jurisdiction (Amendment) Rules 2019) before any work is commissioned.

- 5 All parish churches in the Diocese, as well as all other consecrated churches and chapels and buildings licensed for public worship, which are required to be inspected under The Measure, shall be inspected at least once in any five-year period (“the Quinquennial Inspection”) under this Scheme. For the avoidance of doubt, where a Quinquennial Inspection has taken place under a previous Diocesan Scheme the five-year period shall commence from the date of that previous report.

The scope and contents of the report

- 6 The Quinquennial Inspection shall be completed in accordance with the current guidance issued by the Church Buildings Council (CBC) and St Albans DAC.
- 7 The structure and content of the Quinquennial Inspection Report shall follow the recommendations set out in the current guidance published by the CBC and St Albans DAC.

Appointing and reviewing the Inspector

8. The PCC should ensure that before making an appointment, it has obtained and had regard to advice from the DAC on the suitability of the appointment and is satisfied that the person to be appointed has the specific qualifications and experience required for the church building in question. Advice on appointing a new inspecting professional can be found in the guidance issued by the CBC and St Albans DAC. The DAC Secretary holds a register – available on the DAC pages of the diocesan website - with details of current Quinquennial Inspectors within the diocese and can offer advice on the appointment process. A suitably experienced and where appropriate accredited professional who is not presently on the register can be employed as a Quinquennial Inspector, but the PCC should seek the advice of the DAC before making an appointment.
- 9 The DAC strongly encourages parishes periodically to review the appointment of their Quinquennial Inspector in a competitive tendering process, and the most appropriate time would be when the next inspection is due. Reviewing the appointment does not imply that the PCC must change their inspector, but offers the opportunity to reflect on whether the PCC is receiving good quality service and best value, and has a good relationship with the inspector, and consider their future needs.
- 10 Many parishes find that there is advantage in renewing an appointment, as an ongoing relationship with an experienced inspector who fully understands the building and its ongoing needs, and has a good relationship with the PCC and Churchwardens, is invaluable.

Appointing for project work recommended in the report

- 11 It is for the PCC to decide who to commission to undertake any project work identified in the report, for which a separate agreement would be needed. If the PCC wishes to carry out any publicly funded works which require tendering under the supervision of the Inspector it will need to be able to demonstrate that the Inspector was appointed or re-appointed (see 9 above) within the last 5 years through a competitive tendering process.

Duties and responsibilities of the PCC, Inspector, DAC and Archdeacon

- 12 All Quinquennial Inspectors shall be responsible for entering into and maintaining adequate and appropriate Professional Indemnity Insurance cover, and shall provide written evidence thereof.
- 13 A person who is appointed as a Quinquennial Inspector shall enter into agreement with the PCC of the church (or body acting on their behalf) which they are to inspect. The DAC Secretary can provide advice if requested.
- 14 Agreement of the fee to be charged, including the preparation and issue of the report shall be included in the contract between the PCC (the client) and the Quinquennial Inspector (the service provider) before the inspection takes place. If the inspection necessitates additional professional services, access provision, or work which necessitates a higher fee, additional contracts or a variation must be entered into by the PCC beforehand.
- 15 Within three months of making the inspection, the Quinquennial Inspector shall send copies of the report in paper and digital format to the PCC of the parish in which the church is situated and the Incumbent or Priest in Charge; and in digital format only to the relevant Archdeacon and to the DAC Secretary. The DAC Secretary will liaise with the CBC to provide for copies of reports to be uploaded to the Church Heritage Record.
- 16 The DAC Secretary is responsible, as per the Measure, for keeping a register of those buildings which are covered by the Scheme, containing details of the current Quinquennial Inspector and dates of inspection. The PCC Secretary shall inform the DAC Secretary of the date of the inspection. If the PCC finds it difficult to agree a date with the Quinquennial Inspector they should consult the DAC Secretary who will offer support.
- 17 Nothing in this Scheme shall affect the powers of an Archdeacon to ensure the inspection of every church in their archdeaconry once in five years, as laid down in the Measure.
- 18 In order to provide for the cost of inspections and therein recommended works, every PCC should budget for the report and fabric repairs. They should not, however, use the report as a specification for such works.

Interpretation and Amendment of the Scheme

- 19 Any questions which arise concerning the interpretation of this Scheme shall be referred to the Registrar, whose decision shall be binding.
- 20 This Scheme shall be subject to amendment only by means of a formal motion, presented after due notice to the Diocesan Synod, and approved by it.