

ART & ARCHITECTURE

GUIDANCE AND PROCEDURES FOR PROPOSED LITURGICAL CHANGES TO CHURCHES AND CHAPELS OF THE DIOCESE OF CLIFTON

Introduction

The Liturgy Office is responsible for advising the bishop and our parishes on matters of liturgical Art and Architecture – building, re-ordering, alterations and additions and artistic commissions - for the churches of the diocese. The Liturgy Office seeks to serve and help parishes and other communities to explore how they can make better use of their church buildings and chapels for the celebration of the Sacred Liturgy.

Any proposed changes which affect the liturgical and devotional life of the parish or community will need to be referred to the Liturgy Office for advice and permission where necessary. This may also require diocesan approval and possibly approval from the Historic Churches Committee (in the case of a listed building). For further advice contact the Liturgy Office.

Is Diocesan Permission Needed?

Permission is required for all works that affect the liturgical and devotional life of the parish or community. This is wide-ranging and may range from the construction of a new church building to a major re-ordering or even provision of works of sacred art. It may also extend to the grounds of the church especially where this area includes the approach to the building, its use for the celebration of the Sacred Liturgy (burials, Palm Sunday Liturgy, Eucharistic processions etc), devotional areas and where such grounds are the context for works of sacred art.

The interior of the church or chapel includes the narthex, nave, sanctuary, baptistery, Blessed Sacrament chapel, sacristy, places for the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, shrines, galleries and other places.

Such works include:

1. the overall liturgical environment;
2. the provision of altar, ambo, font, presidential chair, place for the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament and Holy Oils, musical instruments, seating, altar rails, confessionals and also substantial brass and silverware;
3. décor, lighting schemes, furnishings, floor coverings, glazing, sound systems, heating, memorial plaques etc;
4. works of Sacred Art including stained and etched glass, statuary, Stations of the Cross, icons, paintings, mosaics, murals, banners etc;

5. any item that is intended to be a permanent fixture. 'Permanent' is understood to refer to placing of an object, whether fixed or moveable, in the church for a continuous period exceeding three months;
6. the restoration, removal or disposal of any work of art, historic vestments, plate and furnishings from a church or chapel belonging to the Clifton Diocese.

Early Consultation

It often saves time and frustration if you approach the Liturgy Office at the outset, before submitting a formal application. Please do contact the Liturgy Office for comments and advice about your plans **as early on in the project as possible**. The Liturgy Office seeks to serve our communities and offers a consultancy service on the various aspects of sacred space and the general liturgical environment.

Site Visits

It may be that the Liturgy Office will wish to send a member or a small group to discuss your proposals on site or to meet with the parish priest, members of the PPC and other parishioners or members of your community. It will help if you can send as much information as possible, such as sketch plans, brief etc. in advance if you have reached such a stage of development.

Meeting Deadlines

The Art & Architecture committee of the Liturgy Office meets four times a year – see the current copy of the Liturgical Diary for this year's dates. Alternatively, many enquiries can simply be dealt with by email to liturgy@cliftondiocese.com

Remember

Please note that works carried out without approval may have to be reversed. Furthermore, no work is to be commenced in a listed church until a faculty has been received from the Historic Churches Committee, which will not grant such a faculty without approval from the Liturgy Office.

Working in partnership with parishes the Liturgy Office seeks to serve the Sacred Liturgy in all its aspects. Do contact us at liturgy@cliftondiocese.com or by telephoning Doreen Wyatt on 0117 902 5595 so that we may be of help.