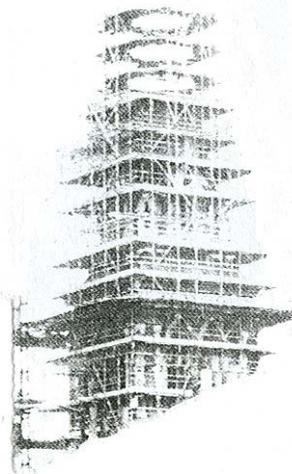


WORKING WITH AN ARCHITECT

*getting the most
from a partnership*



An information leaflet from the
Committee on Church Art and Architecture
of the Church of Scotland
February 2000; updated August 2008



It is often wrongly assumed that the advice of an architect is only required when changes on a big scale are being considered. Architects' skills range from the smallest detail to the 'grand plan'. This is why even when work is being proposed which will not cause much disruption, the Committee may suggest that further advice from an architect should be sought.



This pamphlet was prepared by Alan Dale, Campbell Duff, Douglas Galbraith and other members of the Committee on Church Art and Architecture. The Committee is grateful to the General Trustees, Historic Scotland, and to Sebastian Tombs of the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland, who scrutinized succeeding drafts and offered suggestions and corrections.

Other Pamphlets in this series

Church Windows maintenance, protection, repair, replacement

Church Organs care, conservation, repair and replacement

Gifts and Memorials twenty commemorative ideas

Re-ordering Church Interiors space for a living church

Open Church making better access

Briefing the Artist commissioning a stained glass window

Sacramental Vessels heritage value, care, disposal

These can be obtained from:

**The Committee on Church Art and Architecture, 121 George Street,
Edinburgh EH2 4YN; tel 0131 225 5722 x359, fax 220 3113,
wordoc@cofscotland.org.uk.**

Comments and suggestions for inclusion in any revision of this pamphlet are welcomed.

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WHAT IS AN ARCHITECT?

Before a person can be called a chartered architect, he or she will have completed a seven year course in the design, specification and erection of buildings, and have passed a professional practice examination, which is the final stage of training.

When this has been achieved, their names can then be placed on the register of the Architects' Registration Board, entitling the use of the term 'architect'. They can then apply for membership of one or more of the professional bodies. This will enable them to add such initials after their name as ARIAS/FRIAS – (Associate/Fellow of the) Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland, or RIBA – (Member of the) Royal Institute of British Architects.

Anyone styling themselves as “building consultant”, “architectural designer”, “plan designer” and the like is unlikely to be an architect, will not have comparable skill or knowledge, and may not have professional indemnity insurance cover. When you use a chartered architect, therefore, you are protected. A chartered architect is obliged to uphold the reputation of the architectural profession and fellow professionals.

The benefits of using an architect are therefore obvious, and you will also have security and recourse to the advice of the professional body to which he or she belongs.

WHEN TO SELECT AN ARCHITECT

When being approached about proposals for the modification or extension of a church building, the Committee on Church Art and Architecture frequently advises that an architect be appointed. This is not just to ensure that the finished work is all that the congregation had hoped for but also to help avoid unnecessary work and expense.

It is often wrongly assumed that the advice of an architect is only required when changes on a big scale are being considered. Architects' skills range from the smallest detail to the 'grand plan'. This is why even when work is being proposed which will not cause much disruption, the Committee may suggest that further advice from an architect should be sought.

A great many changes that come before the Committee do not involve any structural change at all – like the redecoration of an interior. Here also, however, an architect may have useful advice to give, and help ensure that the new appearance takes proper account of the shape and aspect of the building as a whole.

In any of these cases, you may only be appointing the architect for the purpose of obtaining preliminary sketch proposals. (It should not be assumed that any approach to an architect is necessarily very expensive.) The preliminary report would indicate the various cost options. This would also indicate where, and at what cost, an architect's skills might be made use of. It would thereafter be possible to enter into a full commission, if appropriate.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT ARCHITECT

Choosing the right architect for your church can appear to be a daunting task, but there are a number of architectural practices with considerable experience of working on church buildings. Who these are can be learned in a number of ways.

One is to approach a firm directly and ask them! They will be able to say whether the work you wish to embark on is familiar to them or sufficiently within their experience for them to tackle.

Another way would be to contact the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland at 15 Rutland Square, Edinburgh EH1 2BE, tel. 0131 229 7545 (fax 228 2188 & www.rias.org.uk), who maintain a list of all practices in Scotland and will be happy to guide you in the right choice for your particular project.

Competitive selection

Where the scope of the envisaged project is significant, it is often sensible to interview a number of prospective architects before making a final selection and appointment, and it may be helpful to ask the architects to identify similar works which they have carried out. It might be helpful to arrange to visit a number of examples.

What will it cost?

At the outset of an appointment all chartered architects must agree in writing the terms of their appointment, the services to be provided, and their fees. It is unwise to proceed without this.

Architects' fees are commonly calculated on a percentage or lump sum basis, although some work may be time charged by agreement. Expenses may be included within the agreed fee or charged separately. When considering an appointment you should discuss the options with your selected architect and have this confirmed in the written terms of his/her appointment.

Detailed guidance on the different ways available of calculating the fee options can be found by contacting the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland.

Remember to study closely what is offered. You only get what you pay for, and it could be unwise simply to go for the lowest fee on offer.

CDM Regulations

The Construction Design and Management (CDM) regulations came into effect on 31 March 1995 and require you, for all but very small projects, to appoint a planning supervisor to co-ordinate a health and safety plan for the project, and to ensure that you are provided with a health and safety file at the conclusion of the project.

You should note that ecclesiastical exemption referred to later in this leaflet does not remove the necessity for you to comply with the CDM regulations.

Your architect will be able to advise you further if necessary.

WORKING WITH YOUR ARCHITECT

At the beginning of each project, what you would like to achieve, together with a financial budget, must be formed into a brief. The architect will be happy to develop this with you if it has not already been drawn up.

The more detailed and clear your brief is, the fewer the problems that will arise as the project proceeds.

It should also be remembered that changes of mind by you, the client, in the course of the project can cost additional money, not only in buildings costs but in the architect's fees also.

At the end of the design process, when all the necessary approvals have been received, the architect will arrange to obtain a Building Warrant through the Building Control department of the local Council. The architect will also issue invitations to tender for the project, either by a single contractor for small jobs or by competitive tender from a number of suitable contractors for the larger projects.

Your architect will also advise you about the various stages of the work, and when you will be required to provide payment. At the end of the process he or she will inspect all the work undertaken and arrange for final payments to be made by you.

Remember, buildings need proper maintenance if they are to remain in good condition. Most churches work within a very limited budget and your architect can assist you to devise a co-ordinated long term plan for the church to be achieved in stages as funding allows. Each section of work can be undertaken as necessary, according to what is seen to be either essential or desirable. This produces a much better result than working piecemeal and - what is of great importance - makes fund raising much easier!

GETTING PERMISSION TO PROCEED

The General Assembly of 1998 approved new regulations for approval for work at buildings. The object is to 'streamline' the process and cut down the time required.

In sum, the first approach is made to the Presbytery who, after giving their approval, transmit the matter to the General Trustees. The latter, in considering the matter themselves, may consult with the Committee on Church Art and Architecture and the Committee on Parish Reappraisal as appropriate.

Thus one submission only (to the Presbytery) is necessary. Relevant committees have been rescheduled so that delays are avoided.

Presbyteries have freedom to resolve that certain types of work do not require their approval. The two exceptions are when cost invokes the Financial Limit (currently £50,000), and where approval from the General Trustees is nevertheless required (which may involve the Committee on Church Art and Architecture, formerly called the Artistic Matters Committee).

The relevant Report (1998 p.36/4) further states:

The Artistic Matters Committee will continue to be available to give advice to those contemplating works and the Assembly is asked to stress to congregations the wisdom of contacting that committee at the earliest possible stage and before detailed proposals have been formulated. Further, the General Trustees will be happy to appoint representatives to discuss difficult cases with local parties and/or representatives of Presbyteries before formal submissions are made.

PROTECTING OUR HERITAGE - ECCLESIASTICAL EXEMPTION

Until January 1999 the **ecclesiastical exemption** provision allowed congregations who worshipped in listed buildings or in buildings in conservation areas to be exempt from Listed Buildings Consent, the only approvals required being those given by the relevant authority of the denomination in question (for the Church of Scotland this is the General Trustees, along with the then Artistic Matters Committee as appropriate).

Since a proposal to curtail this was under discussion, it was decided between the Scottish Churches Committee and Historic Scotland to apply a pilot scheme for three years from January 1999 in respect of external alterations only, with the object of testing the effectiveness of the existing, self-regulatory system. This was subsequently extended by another three years.

What this meant was that, if your building was listed or situated in a conservation area, listed building consent should be sought for external alterations – as it were, on a voluntary basis (i.e. the decision of the local planning authority was not binding). **However, this period is now over and the situation has now returned to the position that obtained before 1999.**

USEFUL ADDRESSES

Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland (RIAS), 15 Rutland Square, Edinburgh EH1 2BE, tel. 0131 229 7545. www.rias.org.uk

Historic Scotland, Longmore House, Salisbury Place, Edinburgh EH9 1SH, tel. 0131 668 8600; fax 0131 668 8788. www.historic-scotland.gov.uk

Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), 66 Portland Place, London W1N 4AD, tel. 0171 580 5533. www.architecture.com

SPACE FOR A LIVING CHURCH

The Work of the Committee on Artistic Matters

- extract from 1999 Report to General Assembly

The work of the Committee takes place between two parameters. In the first place there is the conservation of what is best in the buildings we have inherited. In their extraordinary variety (there is surely no such thing as a 'typical' Church of Scotland church), our buildings capture the different stages of our development - social, liturgical, doctrinal - and offer this journey as a resource for the Church of today and tomorrow. In the grace and beauty of their design and construction, they not only put us in touch with the people of skill, imagination, and prayer who produced them, but are active in our time in drawing forth deeper prayer and challenging us to a greater vision. Such a 'treasuring of our treasures' is perhaps a particularly appropriate note to strike as we journey towards the year 2000.

On the other hand, these buildings have the function of not just housing a congregation but of gathering and building the new community which grows round the Gospel. It is a community which is continually to be refreshed by new faces and new faith, as well as by worship in which the whole people encounter the living God. Many of our buildings were designed, or were later adapted, to conform to a pattern of church life and worship from which we have now largely moved on. A considerable number of approaches to the Committee are for assistance in taking what often have to be very sensitive steps towards creating 'space for a living church'.

It remains to observe that the space which we seek to create is not 'empty' space. Filled with people, it is also populated by objects which focus our attention and enable our worship. The same parameters require that we not only value what has been made in the past but that we 'create new treasures' to assist and inspire worship today and to hand on to generations to come. The Committee have in the past year been in touch with interesting new commissions from contemporary artists and craftspersons, like the new mounting for the pre-Reformation font in Peebles Old and Roland Fraser's carved wooden panel in St. Machar's Cathedral, Aberdeen, commemorating the Scottish poet John Barbour who was also an archdeacon of the Cathedral.

Although the Committee is usually identified with the aesthetic aspect of church buildings, items before us this year have served as a reminder that advice from the Committee can result in a congregation saving large sums of money. The gap between the beautiful and the serviceable is not so wide as is often thought, a conviction inherent in the traditional Scottish designation of the poet as *makar*.

The Committee on Church Art and Architecture is based in the Church Offices in Edinburgh. It is staffed by the Rev Nigel Robb, Lynn Johnson, Anna Reid and Ms Anne White. Its address and telephone number are: The Church of Scotland, 121 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 4YN, tel 0131 225 5722, fax 0131 220 3113. Faxes should be marked for the attention of the Committee. Email address is wordoc@cofscotland.org.uk. Extra copies of this pamphlet may be obtained from the office, price 50p.