

The Diocesan Advisory Committee has continued to meet on a very regular basis to decide on the advice that it will give to the Chancellor of the Diocese when parishes ask for a faculty that will give them the authority to make changes to their buildings and on the advice that it will give to parishes who are thinking of making such an application. In addition the committee has given general advice to parishes about care of their buildings.

Once again we would like to pay tribute to the Committee members who all give of their time voluntarily and unpaid and in addition to attending the meetings, attend site visits, read applications, study plans and write reports for other committee members to read. We have in this diocese a marvellously committed and talented group of committee members and consultants backed up by a very able staff team.

On a number of occasions this year particularly complex cases were brought to resolution by the willingness of some members to go the extra mile and meet at some length with parish representatives and their architects. The Chairman and the Church Buildings Adviser, along with the four archdeacons, have on a number of occasions attended meetings in parishes and deaneries in order to explain the work of the committee and discuss individual cases. Once again this year it has been a privilege to welcome to some of our meetings observers from various Deaneries. We have also welcomed visitors from PCC's who have come to make presentations to us about their applications. Anyone who is particularly interested in attending a meeting should approach the Church Buildings office. The work of the committee is often misunderstood and the more that the committee can go out to the parishes and the parishes come to the committee then the more understanding will result.

We have seen some changes in personnel this year. First of all our Church Buildings Adviser, Louise Bartlett, went on maternity leave and was for that duration ably replaced by Assistant Church Buildings Adviser, Eve Van der Steen. Temporary part time secretarial help was ably provided by Charlotte Stoye. The Chairman, Revd Nigel Freathy, retired at the end of December after five years in the post and was replaced by his deputy, Frank Eul.

During the year the Church Buildings Adviser (CBA) and her deputy have responded to requests to visit and advise 14 (19) churches. In addition the CBA and Assistant/Acting CBA have been on 32 (32) DAC site visits.

In 2013 the DAC published new Churchyard Regulations and associated guidance, to add to the collection of guidance notes already available to parishes in the Your Church Building section on the diocesan website. From the beginning of 2014 there are to be new rules regarding faculty applications which hopefully will make things simpler for everyone involved.

In 2013 6 parishes were sent a DAC award for applications which were good examples of both presentation and design, these were Aylesbeare, Blessed Virgin Mary; Southleigh, St Lawrence; East Teignmouth, St Michael; Petton, St Petrock; Dartmouth, St Saviour and Trusham, St Michael the Archangel.

In July the Chairman and Acting CBA attended the SW DAC Conference at Cheltenham while in September the Deputy Chairman and Acting CBA travelled to Rochester for the Church Buildings Council Annual Conference.

There follows a bullet summary of various aspects of the work of the DAC during 2013:

- In 2013, 293 (426) cases were discussed during the 8 meetings and 8 sub-committee meetings held; 182 (195) of the cases were new ones of which 83 (79) were parishes asking for informal advice rather than a DAC certificate, cases involving provisos, variations of faculties or discussions involving the issue of an Archdeacon's Permission for Temporary Reordering.
- In 2013 64 (68) requests for permission to carry out work to a total value of approximately £158,000 (£204,000) under the Minor Works process were granted, although specific costings for some applications were not collected.
- In 2013 of the 92 (94) new applications for a DAC certificate 67 (76) were granted at the first meeting considering the application. Some more complex cases appeared on the agenda many times before it was possible to issue the DAC's certificate recommending the works.
- In 2013 the Diocesan Registry issued 86 (132) faculties to parishes 23 (37) of which were authorised by the relevant archdeacon and 63 (95) by the Chancellor.