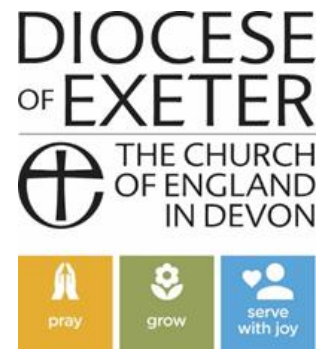
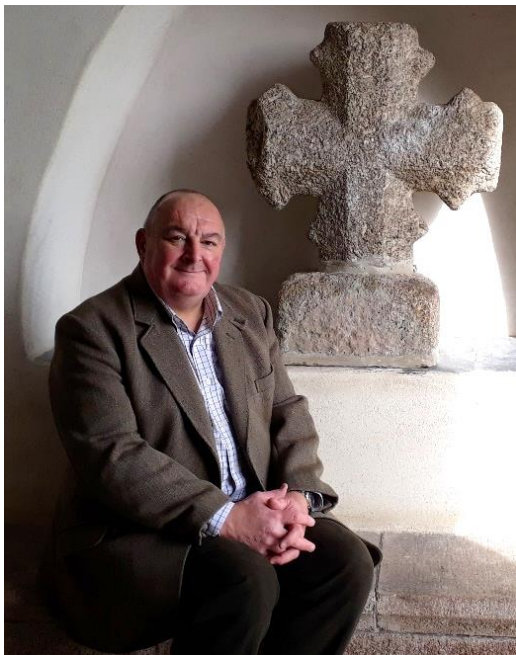


The Diocesan Advisory Committee for the Care of Churches ANNUAL REPORT for 2020



The Diocesan Advisory Committee at work – The Chair's view



The second year of my tenure as Chair of the Exeter DAC could not have been more different to the first. What a challenging year it has been for all of us!

In January, it was business as normal. Returning from the Christmas break, I resumed attending as many of the informal site visits as I could. By the 13th March, the date of my last outing on DAC business, the country was beginning to realise the scale and scope of the problems that might be to come from the impending COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic.

Being married to the South West Regional Director of Public Health, I did have an early warning of the likely disruption. She is also in the clinically highly vulnerable group and although she has been working very full time from home, we decided that we would shield together.

In common with all similar organisations, it was clear that the DAC would not be able to offer its normal service to the 605 churches spread all over this wonderful county of Devon.

Liaising very closely with Nigel Pratt, the DAC Secretary and Senior Buildings Advisor and Alex Copsy our Buildings Advisor and new member of the team, we decided that we must try to continue the work of the DAC as best we could, but to have regard to the safety of the staff, the various volunteer advisors and consultants, the clergy and the members of the PCC's and congregations that we would normally be meeting with.

We were supported by national government advice and guidance from the Church Buildings Council, which was strictly adhered to. We waited to see how the individual churches would develop their own risk assessments and method statements and formulated our own policies about how and when site inspections could continue.

As a consequence, informal site visits were halted on March 18th and resumed on 11th August. Due to the second lock down, these halted again on 3rd November. We hope to resume these as soon as circumstances allow.

With regard to the main bimonthly DAC Committee Meetings, these have continued as scheduled, with the exception on the July meeting which was postponed. These meetings have been held using the video

conferencing facility Zoom and we have sustained a good level of attendance. Even some of the more technically challenged members have met this new arrangement with enthusiasm and we have been able to keep the Faculty application process moving forward, without undue delay. I am very grateful to both the Building Advisors and the whole DAC Committee for facilitating this and for their ongoing commitment and hard work supporting the Diocese.

We have had some changes on the DAC this year which saw us say goodbye to Archdeacon Mark Butchers, Local Authority Representative Bridget Gillard and DAC Consultant Richard Roberts. We have welcomed and will welcome more formally when normal meetings resume, Giles King-Smith as temporary Archdeacon of Barnstaple, Christopher Pancheri as Local Authority nominee, together with Andrew Pidsley and Jane Jones-Warner as DAC Consultants.

We had to rely of smaller numbers attending site visit and this has identified a need for better audio-visual support documentation. We have plans to further enhance this in the future, with an aim of making the attendance at informal site meetings more streamlined.

With regard to the overall levels of activity, these have remained remarkably high, given the constraints imposed upon everyone. The speed of the process has inevitably decreased slightly, following the changes to the Faculty regulations which came into force during the year. The requirement to have received the feedback from all national Consultees before Faculty consideration has introduced some delay. This is mitigated by the possession of the full responses thus avoiding the need for subsequent late changes or provisos. We continue to seek the earliest involvement for informal advice and are very happy to meet with Church representatives and their professional advisors at the initial stages. This can often prevent expenditure on abortive fees, if proposals are unlikely to be favourably considered.

COVID-19 has represented a huge challenge to the mission of the church and its income streams. Individual parishes are still looking at schemes for improvement and alteration and we continue to administer the Quinquennial Inspection scheme. The rules around appointing a suitably experience Architect or Surveyor to undertake this specialist work have also changed. We are concerned that routine programmed maintenance of the entire estate is kept up to date.

Going forward, a significant challenge for all our buildings, their users and professional advisors will be the ability to respond to the General Synod declaration that the Church will be carbon neutral by 2030. This is a very ambitious plan and some of the diocesan building stock such as schools and rectory's will be easier to upgrade than the complex church interior environments with their often-intermittent use, generally poor insulation standards and large spaces relying generally on fossil fuelled and outdated heating systems. It is early days but we are already seeing some innovative solutions coming forward to help meet this target. Simply changing to a green electricity supplier is not, in my opinion, the long-term sustainable answer to a very complex problem. Although there may be payback through costs in use, the capital costs of wholesale changes can be both significant, and unreachable in these financially challenging times.

We shall continue to balance the need to protect our heritage assets against the mission demands for increased efficiency, comfort and modern catering and sanitary facilities. Creative architectural and technical designs will often allow a sensible compromise to be made.



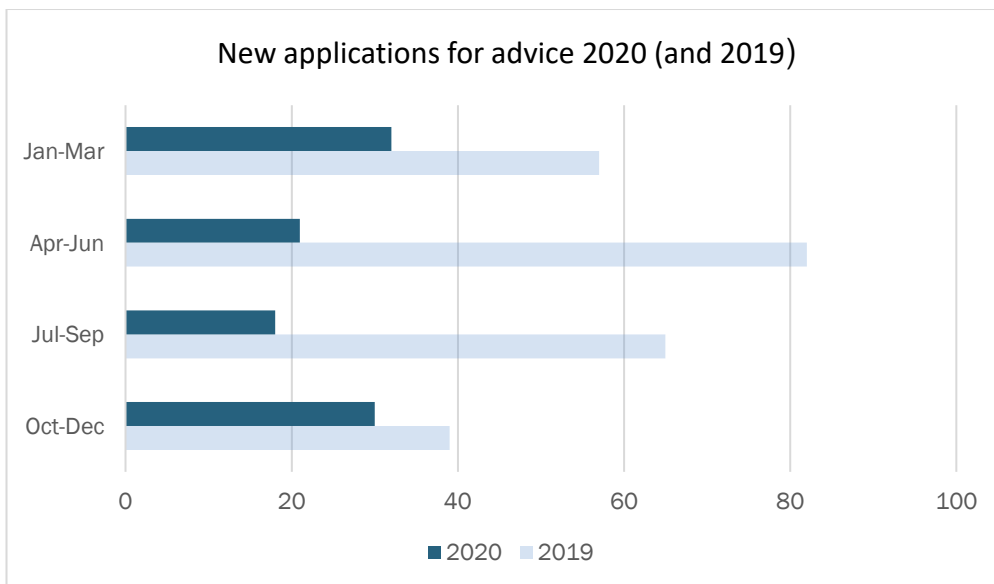
Walker Lapthorne
Chair of the DAC

Review of 2020

The Diocesan Advisory Committee dealt with **152** items of casework at the five full committee meetings and weekly email subcommittees held in 2020. This included formal and informal advice, outline proposals, amendments to faculties, discharge of provisos attached to faculties, and discussions involving the issuing of Archdeacon's Permission for Temporary Reordering (APTR).

DAC advice

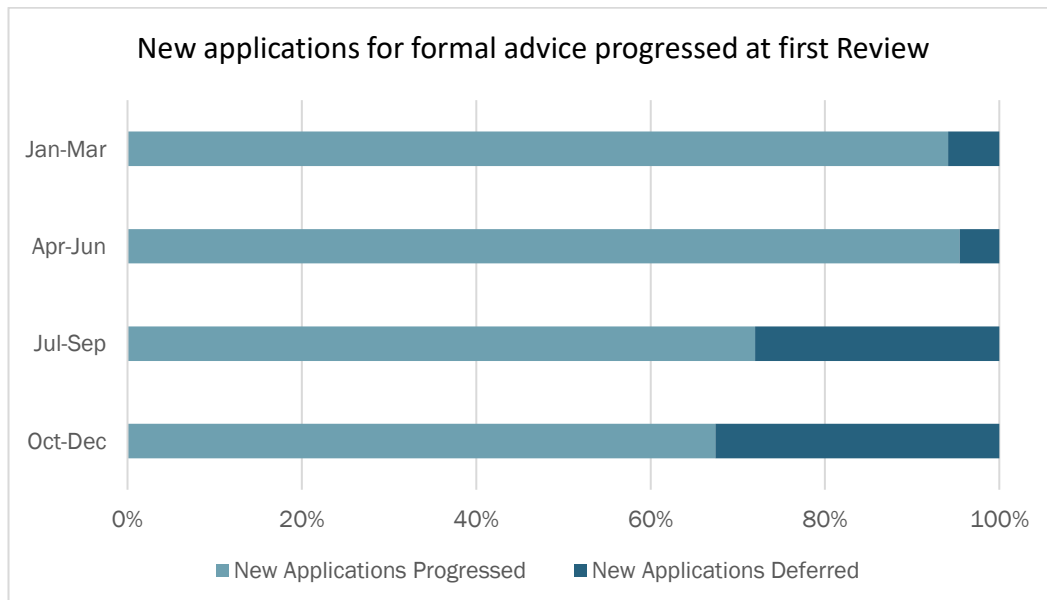
During 2020, the DAC considered **101** new applications for advice. Of these, **70** were for formal advice - the first step towards a Faculty application and **31** for informal advice. The DAC strongly encourage PCCs to apply for early informal advice on all proposals to help guide them through the process and save time and unnecessary expense. Informal advice is available on all matters relating to the alteration, repair and conservation of church buildings and the DAC is particularly fortunate in having access to specialists relating to bells, organs, timberwork, heating, lighting, audio-visual and trees. The further **52** cases considered by the Committee were made up of applications submitted before the start of the year, resubmissions for advice, and amendments to existing faculties.



For the first half of 2020, over **90%** of new cases were progressed at first review. This dropped during the second half of the year, partly due to the national restrictions from March preventing face-to-face site visits to give guidance to PCCs. Nevertheless, it compares favourably to 2019 when 64% of cases were progressed at first review.

In 2020, the average time taken for the DAC to issue a formal Notification of Advice was **41** days - the figure in 2019 was 45 days. From 1st April 2020, changes brought in by the Faculty Jurisdiction (Amendment) Rules 2019 meant that applications requiring external consultation must now have a period of up to 42 days, between the application being made and the DAC advice being issued, for the consultees to respond. This increases the time the application is with the DAC and it has already been demonstrated that consultees invariably wait until the deadline before responding. The full impact of this will be felt in 2021.

Once the Notification of Advice was issued it took an average of a further **93** days until the Chancellor, or Deputy, issued their decision. This period includes the statutory 28 days for the public notice display and it should be noted that the PCC can delay for up to 2 years before submitting their Petition once the DAC has given its advice. In 2020, the average time between a Faculty application being registered by the PCC on the Online Faculty System and the decision issued by the Chancellor, or his Deputy, was **4.5** months.



Site visits

A large part of the work of the DAC is making visits to parishes to offer informal advice on proposals. There is no cost to PCCs for such visits, and parishes are encouraged to make contact with the Church Buildings office at an early stage in their plans to make use of this service. The Church Buildings Advisers are also available to visit parishes for a very early initial discussion on how to start a project, including advice on funding, and how to make a Faculty application.

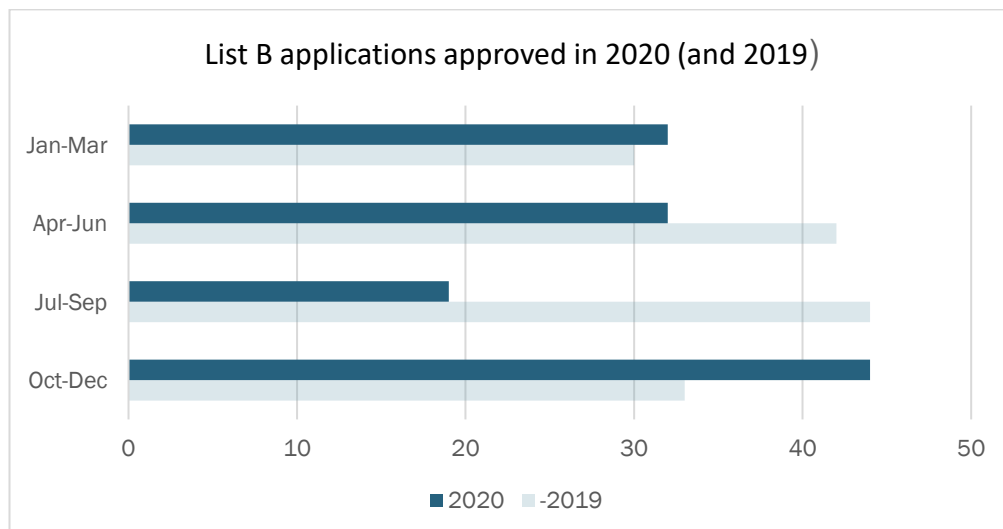


A socially distanced DAC site visit underway at Sticklepath, St Mary.

Due to the COVID-19 restrictions, after March the period when these visits could take place severely contracted. Where visits were possible these were conducted in line with strict protocols, including limits to the number of attendees. Guidelines were sent to each church prior to the DAC visit and a risk assessment carried out. Despite these restrictions, the DAC managed to visit **33** churches during the year, which was significantly less than the 118 visits made in 2019. At the close of 2020, **8** postponed visits remained outstanding.

List B approvals

Many items of minor work that do not need Faculty authorisation may, after consultation with a DAC member or officer, be approved by the Archdeacon under the 'List B' process. List B was updated and expanded on 1st April 2020 by the Faculty Jurisdiction (Amendment) Rules 2019 and the revised list of items can be viewed on the Diocesan website (<https://exeter.anglican.org/resources/church-buildings/faculties/>). In addition, as a response to COVID-19 the Chancellor added new works to the list for Exeter through a Temporary Additional Matters Order to help PCCs adapt churches without the need for a Faculty for a period of one year.



A total of **127** List B applications were approved in 2020. This is comparable to the 129 approved in 2019 and demonstrates that the essential maintenance and repair work that makes up the bulk of List B works needed to continue throughout this exceptional year. The 2020 total includes **17** made under the Temporary Additional Matters Order. The typical time to process a List B application from submission to archdeacon's approval in 2020 remained unchanged from 2019 at **11** days.

Quinquennial Inspections

Every 5 years each PCC must commission an inspector to visit their church and carry out an inspection of the whole building, its fixtures and fittings, the services to and from the building plus the churchyard, as required under the Inspection of Churches Measure 1955. In 2020 this procedure was amended by the Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure. PCCs no longer need to choose an inspector from the Diocesan list but must have regard to the DAC's advice in the matter. The list of approved inspectors will, however, continue to be maintained and made available on request by the Church Buildings Advisers. The inspector must continue to provide the PCC with copies of their report and also send an electronic copy to the archdeacon and the DAC. In 2020, **61** Quinquennial Inspection reports were received, compared to 84 in 2019.

Dr Nigel Pratt
Senior Church Buildings Adviser and DAC Secretary
January 2021

Chair: Walker Lapthorne
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