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Lighting and sound equipment can make a big difference to the character and appreciation of a cathedral building.

It can also play an important part in making a cathedral accessible to all.

We can help you make the right choice for your cathedral.

Download our guidance



Diocese of Salisbury

Where to begin?

Step one: put together a brief

Draw up a clear brief based on:

- An assessment of current provision
- Identification of deficiencies which need to be addressed
- And a clear statement of the key requirements of any new installation

Your cathedral architect and archaeologist should be closely involved in the process.

You may also want to seek the advice of the [Cathedral Projects Support Panel](#).

Step two: make sure all your policies and plans are consistent

Your proposal to install new lighting and sound equipment should be consistent with your cathedral's:

- [Liturgical plan](#)
- [Conservation management plan](#)

Develop your proposal

A named member of chapter should manage proposals to install new lighting or sound equipment.

The proposals should be developed in close discussion with the cathedral architect and archaeologist to make sure the impact of the work is understood and any necessary mitigation measures are incorporated from an early stage.

This should be the case even where the detailed proposal will be developed by or with an external specialist consultant.

What permissions do you need?

For installations involving permanent addition to the fabric

Installing lighting or sound equipment might be thought of as a permanent addition under the [Measure](#) which would require the approval of [your Fabric Advisory Committee](#).

In practice, however, most recent major new lighting schemes in cathedrals have been a matter for [the Commission](#) rather than FACs because of their significant visual and physical impact on how a cathedral is seen and experienced.

For installations involving permanent alteration to the fabric

Works that involve permanent alterations to the cathedral's fabric such as the removal of significant existing fittings or interventions in historic fabric require an application to [the Commission](#).

For external lighting schemes

For external lighting schemes the Commission recommends that you also consult your local planning authority at an early stage on any necessary consents. You should take account of any local policy and guidance on, for example, dark skies and light pollution.

What do we look for in your application?

The Commission and your Fabric Advisory Committee will assess your proposal based on its effect on the architectural, archaeological, artistic or historic character of the cathedral.

This includes:

- Its physical impact on the fabric and archaeological remains
- Its visual impact on the character of the building

Set out how the visual impact and any archaeological impact will be mitigated.

In addition, demonstrate how your proposals take account of

- Energy efficiencies and benefits from the latest technology
- Maintenance and upgrading considerations, and the need for any ongoing technical support
- Access and accessibility: proposals should refer to any access audit or other assessment

Supporting information for your application

Include the following supporting information with your application to the Commission or your Fabric Advisory Committee:

- An introductory statement by chapter with background information and putting the work in context
- A statement of the need for the work
- Reference to the cathedral's access audit or other assessment
- Reference to the cathedral's liturgical and conservation management plan
- Reference to any facilities audit and trials or mock-ups that have been carried out, and how these have informed the proposals
- A description of the proposed work
- Illustrative material (e.g. drawings, photographs, etc.) – these might be provided by an external consultant
- Relevant technical information (e.g. equipment specifications, fixings, finishes, etc.)
- Impact statements by the cathedral architect and archaeologist

Find out more about preparing your application

Also of interest



Cathedral architects and archaeologists



Take the lead on being green

Protect God’s creation

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