

- How to reorder and extend
- Liturgical reordering

A successful alteration or extension to a church can be a great enhancement to parish life.

We can help you follow a proper process and avoid pitfalls.

## Download our guidance

- [Reordering: Alterations and extensions](#)



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## How to reorder and extend

Together as the Parochial Church Council, once you've decided to think about a reordering proposal, you need to take the following steps:

### [Step one: consult your Diocesan Advisory Committee](#)

Your DAC is always willing to visit and advise you, so an excellent first step is to ask them for help.

They will be aware of what solutions have worked well in other places and what particular issues need to be faced in particular circumstances.

Visit the churches they recommend where successful solutions have been put in place.

Contact your DAC

### **Step two: think carefully about your needs**

It's easy to get fixed on a particular solution early on (e.g. building an extension or taking out pews).

But early-stage thinking needs to concentrate on:

- What you need (i.e. space for meetings, new facilities)
- And why you need it

Remember that most church reordering is small-scale.

Think about the big picture. And try and make sure that you do enough to give yourself what is needed while avoiding the temptation to be over-ambitious.

At the same time, think holistically. Take into account issues which may not be directly related to your project such as your liturgical needs and access for all.

Find out more about understanding your needs

### **Step three: prepare initial statements of significance and needs**

The statements will set out the significance of the building and its relevant parts, and explain your needs in some detail.

Find out how to write your statements

### **Step four: get advice from your architect**

Prepare a brief for your architect, explaining your needs in detail, so that they can prepare the plans you will need to get permissions and translate your vision into reality.

Although it is often the case that inspecting architects are used for alteration and extension work, it is quite possible to appoint another architect.

Ask for advice from your DAC, and look carefully at the experience of candidates in undertaking work to historic churches.

When the architect has prepared initial drawings, consult again with your DAC.

Where the proposals are likely to be major, consult the church and wider community. Hold a public meeting and ask for views.

Find out more about appointing an architect

### Step five: consult with others

We recommend consulting as soon as you have outline plans, and before you have made big decisions about the final shape of the project.

Consultation is part of faculty applications but can also be done before you put in an application, to help shape your plans and avoid problems later on.

Where necessary, and as advised by the DAC, consult with:

- Your congregation and other users of your building
- The community around your church – especially those you hope to bring into your church through your re-ordering plans
- **Historic England**
- National amenity societies
- The Church Buildings Council
- The local planning authority

### Step six: get detailed drawings

When you have all the views and advice from consultees, including your DAC, ask your architect to help you translate this into detailed drawings, making sure that you take account of the issues that people have raised.

You may need to consult people again once you have detailed drawings, depending on the scale and complexity of the proposals.

Then ask your Parochial Church Council to pass a resolution to apply for a faculty and to enter into a contract for the work (subject to the grant of a faculty).

Apply for formal advice from your DAC and then petition for a faculty.

### **Ask yourself:**

Can you afford to run and look after your new facility when it is built?

Funding bodies may be able to support you to carry out the reordering project if they support your vision and have evidence that there are robust and sustainable plans to achieve it.

But, it is your responsibility to make sure those plans are put into action and that you achieve long-term financial sustainability.

This is something that will require an ongoing commitment of energy and enthusiasm that reaches far beyond the process of reordering itself.

[Back to top](#)

## Liturgical reordering

Liturgical reordering means to make changes to the church to allow worship to be improved or done in different ways.

If you are thinking about taking on a liturgical reorder, then it will help if you have thought about:

- How you worship
- And how you want the building to help this

You can get temporary permission to experiment and find what works for you. Ask your archdeacon for help.

When you think you know what you want, look carefully at the following issues:

### Remember each church is different

What works in one place may not work in another.

But do visit examples of reordering. It can be a great source of inspiration and a way of bringing the Parochial Church Council together to think about the issues involved.

### Think about how you use each part of the building liturgically

Ask yourselves:

- How the visual focus points work in relation to another (e.g. font, altar, etc.)?
- How will you show the importance of the main altar?
- Does your church really need a nave altar? If so, why?

With reasonable sight lines and a good sound system, people sitting in the nave can feel involved with activities happening in the chancel.

### Think about the position of your font

How well does it work liturgically?

Our Canons say that the font should normally be near the main entrance.

There is a good liturgical foundation for this and just as the candidates for baptism are asked if they 'turn to Christ', the congregation can turn to face the place of baptism.

Other arrangements can sometimes be acceptable.

Find out more about fonts

### [What about being bold and innovative?](#)

You could adapt a font for baptism by affusion or immersion.

The House of Bishops advises that there should normally only be one font in a church.

So you should avoid any portable or temporary fonts.

[Back to top](#)

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