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well-loved places of worship in England.

Holly Hayes

## Background to Major Churches

The Major Churches are 300 of the largest and most significant churches in England. The designation of Major Church is recognised by both the Church and the state. A Major Church has all or most of the following characteristics:

- Physically very big (over 1000m<sup>2</sup> footprint)
- Grade I, II\* or (exceptionally) II listed
- Exceptional architectural and/or historic significance
- A role or roles beyond those of a typical parish church, making a considerable civic, cultural and/or economic contribution to the wider community.

Major Churches face a different scale of opportunities and challenges compared to the vast majority of other Church of England church buildings. They should receive a higher level of attention from their diocese and from the Church Buildings Council due to their special functions, significance and potential.

You can find the list of designated churches online on the [Church Heritage Record](#).

You can read the 2016 research report on Major Churches conducted in partnership with Historic England and Purcell [here](#).

## The Major Churches Network

The Major Churches Network exists to offer mutual support to the clergy and lay leaders of the Major Parish Churches. All Major Parish Churches are encouraged to join via the Network's website which is [www.majorchurches.org](http://www.majorchurches.org)

## Conservation Management Plans

Major Churches are of such size and significance that having a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) for the building is strongly recommended.

A CMP allows everyone to agree on the values and significance of the church and should be used to inform all decisions that affect the building. It can help the success of grant applications and support applications for faculty, planning permission, listed building consent or scheduled monument consent.

You can find two good examples of Conservation Management Plans for Major Churches below.

- [St Mary Oxford - CMP](#)
- [St Germans, Cornwall - CMP](#)

If you would like to talk about the benefits of a CMP for your church, and how to go about commissioning one, please contact the Cathedral and Church Buildings Division using the link below.

## Disaster Management Plans

Preparing as best you can for emergency situations is especially important for Major Churches, whose buildings, and the objects they contain, are some of the nation's most treasured heritage assets.

Visit our page on producing a [Disaster Management Plan](#) and see the case studies from other Major Churches below

- [Bath Abbey Emergency Reaction Team Plan](#)
- [St Peter Monkwearmouth DMP](#)
- [St Paul Jarrow DMP](#)

## Liturgical Plans

Liturgical Plans are particularly valuable for Major Churches because of their potential for rich and varied worship use, and because building proposals, even if not motivated by worship needs, may have an impact on the liturgical use of the building. An understanding of the liturgical life of the church is therefore key. Explaining how the building is used for worship is fundamental to considering changes to a church building and supporting faculty permissions and grant applications.

The Cathedral and Church Buildings Division is developing guidance on liturgical planning for Major Churches. In the meantime, guidance for Cathedrals can still be helpful and is available [here](#).

## Apply to Become a Major Church

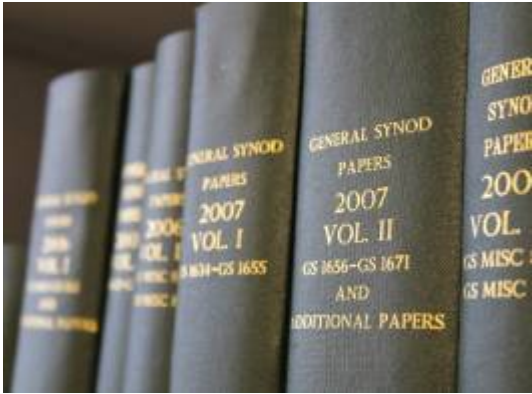
Applications to become a Major Church are considered by the Church Buildings Council. To apply, please use the form found [here](#).

Please note that the Council will not consider applications that have not first been approved by your DAC, so be sure to speak to your [DAC Secretary](#) first.

## Contact Us

Please contact the Cathedral and Major Churches Officers in the [Cathedral and Church Buildings division](#) if you have any questions or would like to know more.

# Also of interest



## How we manage our buildings



[\(see also the planning process\) to secular permissions](#)

## Make your building sustainable

[Find out how you can act to help the environment](#)

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