

Access works in Cathedrals

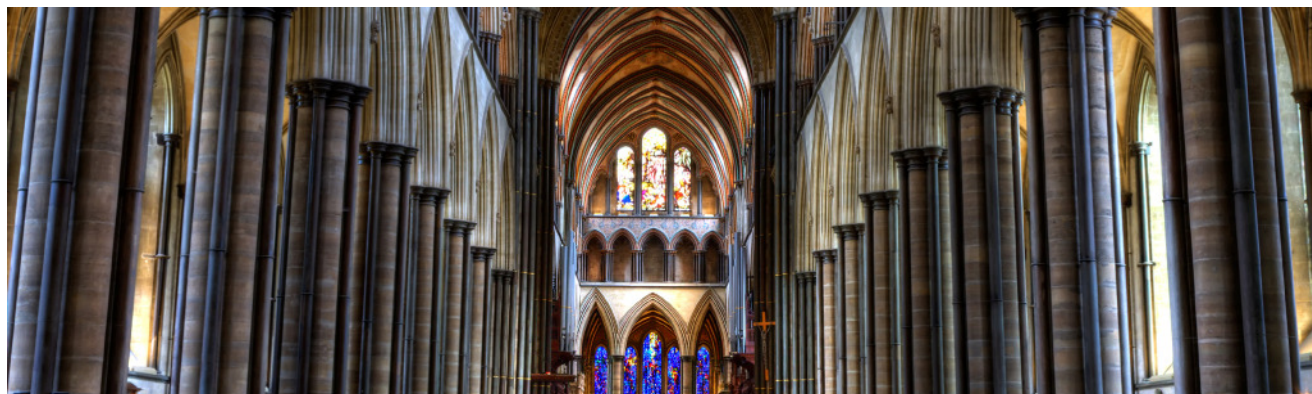
A Cathedrals Fabric Commission

Policy and Practice Note

ChurchCare



16,000 buildings. One resource



The Commission considers all applications on their own merits and in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Care of Cathedrals Measure 2011 (the Measure) and the Care of Cathedrals Rules 2006 (the Rules).

This Policy and Practice Note sets out its expectations of an application and some of the considerations it will bring to bear on its decision-making.

Introduction

The Commission strongly encourages all cathedral chapters to carry out an **Access Audit** of the cathedral, its precinct, and ancillary buildings as appropriate, to provide an accurate picture of access issues and needs.

Access policies

It also encourages all chapters subsequently to develop an **Access Policy** for their cathedral to provide a framework for **managed solutions** to access issues such as carrying out work to the cathedral building, precinct or ancillary buildings, and installing new access equipment; and to guide the development of specific proposals. This Policy should be reviewed and updated on a regular basis. Any application for approval of access works should **make reference** to this Policy.

Preparing an application

Temporary installations do not require approval under the Care of Cathedrals Measure 2011. 'Temporary' is usually held by the Commission to be a period of six months and not more than twelve months. The Commission nevertheless strongly recommends the chapter to take advice on any such installation from the cathedral's **Fabric Advisory Committee (FAC)**.

However, if a 'temporary' installation will necessitate work that will have a **material effect** on the fabric of the cathedral such that it would fall under *CCM 2 (1) (a) (i)* (for example significant physical intervention for fixing an installation), an **application for approval** should be made.

The Commission also strongly recommends that a proposal to carry out access works or to install

new access equipment is assessed by the chapter against its **liturgical plan** for the cathedral and against the **Conservation Management Plan (CMP)** where the cathedral has one. In the absence of a CMP, the Commission recommends that the **Cathedral Architect** and **Archaeologist** provide a statement on the nature and significance of the parts of the cathedral or fabric affected by the work/installation and the likely impact of the work.

The installation of new access equipment (such as a ramp or stairlift) might be considered under the Measure to comprise the **permanent addition** to the cathedral church of an object which would **materially affect its character**. As such, an application for its approval would usually be made **to the FAC**.
CCM 2 (1) (d)





However, in some cases the installation may necessitate **permanent alteration** to the cathedral fabric (such as removal of fabric to ease access, addition of a stone-built ramp or installation of a platform lift, often with an associated pit) and so require an application **to the Commission**. It is also open to the Commission to **call-in** for its own determination any proposal which gives rise to such special interest that it agrees the application should be determined by it.
CCM 6 (1) (a) (i) and (b)

The proposed access work or installation of access equipment will be assessed on its **material effect** on the architectural, archaeological, artistic or historic character of the cathedral. This will include its **physical impact** on historic fabric, including above- and below-ground archaeology, and its **physical and visual impact** on the character and appreciation of the building.

The Commission strongly recommends that a proposal to carry out access works or to install new access equipment is **managed by a named member of chapter** and that proposals are developed in close discussion with the **Cathedral Architect** and the **Cathedral Archaeologist** in order that the physical and other impact of the work is understood and any necessary mitigation measures incorporated from an early stage.

The Commission will expect any application to set out clearly how the impact of the work is to be **mitigated** (e.g. through design detailing, colour and finish of access equipment to mitigate its

visual and physical impact on the cathedral; and any measures taken to mitigate archaeological impact).

The Commission is mindful that many other types of work at cathedrals will have an **access and accessibility** dimension, such as the design and installation of new lighting or audiovisual systems, liturgical reordering, precinct landscaping, the design of new facilities (toilets, education, hospitality, welcome and orientation etc), and the design of education or interpretation provision for visitors. It will expect that the access dimension of such works is considered fully by the chapter when bringing forward such proposals for approval.

Any application for approval of access works or installation of new access equipment in a cathedral should be accompanied by **supporting information** covering:

- **Introductory statement** by the chapter providing background information and setting the work in context.
- A statement of the **need** for the work.
- Reference to the cathedral's **Access Policy**.
- Reference to the cathedral's **liturgical plan**, and to the **CMP**, or a **statement of significance** on the fabric affected by the work.
- A **description** of the proposed work and **illustrative material** (drawings, visualisations etc).
- Any relevant **technical information** (e.g. equipment specification, installation fixings and finishes etc).

- **Impact statements** by the Cathedral Architect and/or Cathedral Archaeologist as appropriate.

The Commission plans to revise its own Advisory Note on access works to take account of the Equality Act 2010. However, the existing Note might still be of assistance. It is available, along with other information and advice, via: www.churchcare.co.uk via the Cathedrals – Guidance and Advice pages.

The Commission also commends the advice published in 'Widening the Eye of the Needle' <http://www.chpublishing.co.uk/product.asp?id=2394312> and English Heritage's Easy Access to Historic Buildings <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/easy-access-to-historic-buildings/> and Easy Access to Historic Landscapes <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/easy-access-historic-landscapes/>

Useful information, particularly on the impact of the Equality Act 2010, is also available from the Home Office (quick start guides) <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/equalities/equality-act-publications/equality-act-guidance/> and the Equalities and Human Rights Commission <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/>

For advice and to discuss a potential project please contact the Commission via the Secretariat: Tel 020 7898 1888, 1862 or 1863 or e-mail: becky.clark@churchofengland.org

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