

The Church of England Conservation Grants Programme Procurement Policy

- A.** For work indirectly procured, ie by parishes awarded conservation grants, we will require evidence that best value was sought:
- i. It is recognised that conservation work is a highly specialised discipline, with a limited number of qualified conservators, and suitable suppliers may be very limited.
 - ii. Best value must also be considered in the light of the Church of England's Net Zero initiative and commitment to protecting the environment: it would not wish to support a tendering process that incurred an inordinate amount of travel and cost obtaining conservation reports and quotations. The absence of a second or third quote should not be a bar to making a grant if best value can be adequately demonstrated. The objective is to make a cost/quality/sustainability comparison. This will be helped by having itemised quotations. Even a single quotation which is itemised will provide some basis for comparison with work previously commissioned by the church, or by nearby churches for similar work.
 - iii. Quotes for conservation treatments are not always like-for-like, and quality of treatment proposals using conservation standards can lead to costs not always being the cheapest from accredited conservation professionals. This is where the cost/quality balance is important.
- B.** The Church of England Conservation Grants Programme is accustomed to the difficulties that parishes face and it offers extensive advice and support in finding suitable conservators, in line with the Institute of Conservation (Icon) accreditation scheme. By working closely with Icon and requiring accreditation for most applications, the programme relies on the quality assurance provided by the accreditation process, and the expertise of its 54 specialists from its six conservation committees.
- C.** As the Church Buildings Council has a rigorous assessment process in place (including scrutiny by its specialist conservation committees and oversight by the Council) grant applications are considered on a case-by-case basis. Our committee membership consists of accredited architects, professional accredited conservators, and institutional representatives, with a deep knowledge of the commissioning process and current costs, with the ability to assess whether best conservation practice, and best value has been evidenced.
- D.** If the proposed contractor is related to, or known, on a personal level to the parish, they would be expected to declare an interest, and a rigorous procurement process will still apply.
- E.** For minor fabric repair grants related to the conservation of an object, it is expected that the inspecting architect will have oversight and final signoff of the works, in the form of a certificate of completion.
- F.** For the funding of scaffolding/access for training programmes, we would expect to see at least two quotes for the work.
- G.** We do not expect multiple quotes for conservation reports.

Cathedral and Church Buildings Department, v.01 November 2024