

THE CHURCH BUILDINGS COUNCIL

Recruitment of new Council member, to serve 2025-27

A casual vacancy has arisen for a lay or ordained General Synod member to serve on the Church Buildings Council to serve from January 2025 until 31 May 2027. The person will be appointed on the nomination of the Appointments Committee.

The Council is a national body, advising all levels of the Church of England on the care, development and use of church buildings. As a national body it keen for its membership to reflect the diversity of England, particularly in relation to gender, ethnic and geographic location. Expressions of interest from the PGM (People of Global Majority) population are especially sought to broaden the experience and perspective of the Council.

In February 2020 the General Synod gave the Church the challenge of achieving net zero carbon by 2030. The Council has a key role in advising churches as they work to achieve this and experience of working with historic buildings to reduce carbon emissions plays a key part of the Council's work.

Role of Church Buildings Council – summary

1. The Church Buildings Council is responsible for setting national level policies and giving both general and specific advice on the care and development of church buildings. The Council also works at a national level with government and others. Advised by specialist committees, it awards grants towards the cost of the care and conservation of churches and their furnishings. It gives formal advice on casework proposals of high significance or controversy and, through the Statutory Advisory Committee, it gives advice on the architectural significance and potential of church buildings being considered for closure.
2. The Council publishes its guidance and advice on the Church of England website and is most readily accessed at ChurchCare.co.uk.

Time commitment / meetings

3. The Council presently meets six times annually. Meetings are spaced evenly through the year, with no meetings in August.
4. Meetings are normally held at Church House in London and typically take up to three hours depending on the volume of business. Business may be undertaken between meetings. Members are called on to undertake some site visits to church buildings.
5. Papers are issued electronically at least one week in advance of the meeting. Total time commitment is estimated at no more than fourteen days per year.

Member skills and experience

6. The Council is committed to supporting church buildings as centres for worship and mission and its members must be in sympathy with this aim. It is essential that the Council collectively has a wide range of relevant skills and experience.
7. Relevant knowledge and skills for Council members include:
 - policy work relating to managing a large collection of buildings;
 - the liturgical use of church buildings;
 - how to successfully reduce the carbon footprint of heritage buildings across their lifetime, considering their energy use and the sustainability of materials;
 - the resilience and adaptation of heritage buildings to a changing climate,
 - the wider use and development of church buildings;
 - the future of church buildings not regularly needed for worship;
 - raising and granting funds for the conservation and development of church buildings and furnishings;
 - technical or specialist issues relevant to the care of church buildings, access and furnishings.

And an understanding of:

- architectural or art history;

- the wider built heritage sector.
- the importance of voluntary work to the care of church buildings

Role of the Council

8. The list below provides detail on the role of the Church Buildings Council:
- (a) To formulate policy in relation to the strategic use and future of church buildings.
 - (b) To influence national policy as it relates to matters affecting church buildings and funding available to them.
 - (c) To consider consultation by and requests for advice from judges and registrars of the ecclesiastical courts and from Diocesan Advisory Committees in relation to applications or possible applications for the grant of a faculty. This forms a part of each Council meeting.
 - (d) To promote the care and conservation of churches and the greater knowledge, understanding and enjoyment of and artistic activity relating to churches both within the Church of England and more widely.
 - (e) To promote standards of good practice in relation to the use, care, conservation, repair, planning, design and development of churches.
 - (f) To support the work of Diocesan Advisory Committees.
 - (g) To assist with discussions over the future of church buildings considering the future including those that may no longer be required for regular worship.
 - (h) To advise on proposals for legislation that may affect church buildings.
 - (i) To create an environment where funders are confident to support church buildings in the long-term.

Terms

Council membership is not remunerated although reasonable out of pocket expenses are paid.

Wider context

The secretariat for the Church Buildings Council is provided by the Cathedral and Church Buildings Department, whose Director, Emily Gee, is also Secretary of the Church Buildings Council. The Division has a staff of 31 and also services the Cathedrals Fabric Commission for England, and includes the Closed Churches Team.

The Dioceses, Pastoral and Mission Measure 2007 sets out the role of The Church Buildings Council in Part VII (Appendix 1: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukcm/2007/1>). Schedule 4 – The Church Buildings Council.

For further information about the Church Buildings Council please visit

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/churchcare/church-buildings-council>

Appointment process

This post will be appointed by the Archbishops on the nomination of the Appointments Committee. If you would like to speak about the role, please contact David Knight (davd.knight@churchofengland.org) in the first instance.