



## APPOINTING AN INSPECTING ARCHITECT

The Inspection of Churches Measure 1955 requires that each parish must appoint from an approved list an inspecting architect for each church for which it is responsible.

Architects and surveyors are highly qualified professionals who have completed a number of years of study and practical training before becoming registered and able to practice. Many have additional qualifications, for example in the conservation of historic buildings. Those who care for our churches are generally members of the Ecclesiastical Architects and Surveyors Association (EASA) and the DAC encourages such membership: others are also members of one or more of the amenity societies, for example the Georgian Group or the Society for the Protection of Ancient Building (SPAB). The DAC maintains a list of approved architects and building surveyors who are known to have specific knowledge and levels of expertise in the care of ecclesiastical buildings.

Any qualified architect or building surveyor may apply to the DAC to be included on its approved list. After making an initial written submission each applicant is invited for interview by a panel from the DAC which includes at least one of the archdeacons. This is to enable members to judge their skills and knowledge and to allow the applicant to ask questions of the Committee.

There are various grants available to assist in funding repairs to listed buildings: where such grants are made by English Heritage it is now a requirement for the architect overseeing the work to be accredited. This means some additional study and the preparation of papers to demonstrate competence and experience in the care of historic buildings. The DAC Secretary will give further information about the accreditation scheme if requested. Parishes are encouraged to recommend to their inspecting architect that they become accredited if they have not already done so.

Parishes are advised to consult with their archdeacon before appointing a new inspecting architect. If at any time they are dissatisfied with the work of their architect they should also discuss the matter with the Archdeacon. A copy of the DAC's approved list is available from the DAC Secretary. If the parish decided to appoint a new architect the DAC Secretary must first be advised in writing of the proposal.

**Never forget that it is the parish which employs the architect – not the other way round!**

The objective of all parishes, however, should be to develop and encourage a long term relationship with their architect, enabling the architect to learn a great deal about the church building, its history, its construction, its strengths and its weaknesses. Such knowledge and information is added to over the years and is an invaluable asset for both parties. **Such a relationship is built on trust and understanding and cannot be too strongly emphasised.**