



SELECTING THE CONTRACTOR – TENDERING PROCEDURES

Having successfully appointed an inspecting architect who has prepared his quinquennial inspection report or responded successfully to the parish's brief for work to be undertaken to the church, assessed budget costs, completed a detailed specification, obtained the necessary approvals and Faculty document, competitive estimates should be sought for the work.

It is always tempting to rely on the help of local people or members of the church community who may be able to undertake the work at apparently less cost than specialist contractors, and without involving your inspecting architect. However, it is usually wiser and more prudent in the long term to involve the architect, particularly where the church is a listed building of historic or architectural interest. Professional advice on all types of building work will normally ensure they are well executed and the PCC obtains good value for money.

The architect will discuss with you the suitability of particular contractors to undertake specific types of repair. General builders may be competent on new housing work or normal maintenance repairs, but specialist contractors will be needed for stonework repairs, re-pointing of stone or brickwork and the repair of leadwork to roofs and gutters, cast iron work etc. Other specialists will be needed for repairs to stained glass or leaded light windows, bells, clocks, ancient timberwork, stone roofs, etc.

If a contractor is not well known, the architect should obtain references and information of past experience in working on similar ecclesiastical buildings.

The architect will issue tender documents to the agreed selected list of contractors and these will normally include:-

1. Drawings illustrating the scope and extent of the works with details of its method of construction.
2. Specification and schedule of works.
3. Bills of quantity*
4. Tender stage health and safety plan*
5. Form of tender and instructions for its formal submission.

* Documents usually needed on larger projects only.

There will be occasions when an archaeological assessment report will also be included in tender documents. Tenders should be returned on a specific agreed date at a stipulated time (normally 12 noon). It is good practice for them to be sent to the Parish Office or Vicarage/Rectory and to be opened by the architect in the presence of the Incumbent and Churchwardens. The architect should assess the tenders, check their accuracy and issue a report to the PCC with a recommendation for the appointment of a contractor.

Small-scale repairs may be completed without the exchange of formal contract documents, but a letter of appointment from the architect on behalf of the PCC should be issued: the architect will deal with matters such as supervision, insurances, seemly behaviour and preventative measures to avoid the risk of fire.

Building works which are more complex will normally require the use of one of the standard forms of building contract. It is essential for the architect to manage this administration work for parishes, and that the obligations of both the PCC and any appointed contractor are known and understood by both parties. Most standard forms of contract require a contract administrator, whose role is usually undertaken by the architect.

INSURANCE

Building works pose risks and it is essential these are insured against. Standard forms of building contract require specific insurances to be taken out. It is important that the PCC is aware of the risks that can arise, and of its own insurance obligations, as well as those of any contractor appointed to undertake building work.

The architect will advise the PCC of the detailed requirements for insurance and will obtain information that will ensure any contractor is properly insured. The Ecclesiastical Insurance Group (EIG) **must** be advised in all cases of building or repair works taking place prior to work commencing on the site.

If in any doubt, churchwardens should consult with their architect and the EIG office at Gloucester to clarify matters and to ensure adequate insurances are in place.

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