

Delegation DAC site visit – what to expect

When is a delegation visit carried out?

A visit by a delegation of the DAC (Diocesan Advisory Committee) is usually made after any major faculty application is submitted to the DAC for consideration.

By this stage in the process, you will probably have already had a pre-application visit by your DAC case officer, and prepared draft Statements of Significance and Need. You should also have appointed an architect or surveyor who will have produced an options appraisal (also called a feasibility study) or sketch drawings.

In almost every scheme where new facilities, extension or reordering of the church building is proposed, a delegation of the DAC will attend site before the scheme is discussed at a meeting of the full committee. This ensures that those considering the application have seen the building first-hand, met the parish team, understood the need, and the current obstacles to meeting that need, and how the need might best be met.

Who will attend the visit?

If the nature of the proposals means that consultation with other bodies, such as Historic England, the Victorian Society or the Church Buildings Council, will be required during the faculty process, then the DAC case officer may invite representatives of these bodies to attend the site visit. The DAC case officer will invite relevant members of, or advisors to, the DAC to attend the visit. This selection is informed by the proposals set out in the supporting documents provided but will usually include specialists in architectural history, architecture or archaeology.

The incumbent should always attend this visit, together with the key members of the parish project team. The documentation you have already provided to the DAC will form the basis of the discussions on site, and the delegates will have read the papers beforehand.

The DAC members who attend this visit do not have any power to make decisions about whether permission will be granted for the scheme and cannot speak on behalf of the whole committee.

What happens after the visit?

Following the visit, the DAC case officer will produce a draft site visit report which will be considered by the full committee at the next available meeting, prior to the report being issued to the parish.

Usually, the DAC committee members who attend the visit will be the subcommittee to whom consideration of the detailed design of the scheme will be delegated once the full Committee have resolved that they are content to support the principle of the scheme.