

London Diocesan Advisory Committee



CHURCH NOTICE BOARDS

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1. INTRODUCTION

(a) Your notice boards present an image of your church to the world. It is important to work out your proposals thoroughly and provide full information to the DAC, especially for a church which is a listed building or in a conservation area. Make sure too that your proposals are well illustrated for committee members who may not know the building.

2. POINTS TO THINK ABOUT

(a) The following are among the factors which you should consider. Further remarks on each may be found by clicking on the link in the index at the start of the guidance paper.

- Purpose
- Deciding between fixed and movable notices

- Position and context
- Architectural appearance
- Wording

3. THOUGHTS ON DESIGN AND PRESENTATION

3.1. Purpose

What is the purpose of your notice board or boards? Are they:

- for advertisement? i.e. to present who you are and what as a parish church you stand for;
- to display fixed information? i.e. names and addresses of clergy, details of services and times, opening times and arrangements;
- to explain where to gain entry? You might be surprised how difficult it is to find the way into some churches, even when they are unlocked!;
- to denote that this is a Church of England Parish Church? You may wish to get the advice of the Diocesan Communications Department on how to do this;
- to announce special services and events, to display public or official notices or citations etc? Such notices will be temporary in character.

3.2. Deciding between fixed and movable notices

(a) You need to decide whether the notices and other information on the board are to be fixed or movable. You may need some of each type.

(b) To help decide you should ascertain whether your notices would be accommodated by one multi-purpose notice board design, or whether it would be better to have two or even three boards with different designs and purposes.

(c) A board for posters or moveable lettering may need a lockable casement front, though these need to be carefully chosen to avoid flimsy tackiness.

(d) Posters and other notices should be designed with no less care than the notice board itself. Each type of notice should be carefully sited in relation to its purpose, and should all be designed in a style related to one another. They should be worthy of each other and of you, even though a faculty may not be needed for each and every individual notice! They are what will be seen and what you will be judged by.

3.3. Position and context

(a) The location of each board and how it will be seen in its context are of crucial importance. A notice board in the City of London may not be the

same as one in Camden, Harrow or West Middlesex. Different sites in places of very different urban and suburban appearance will call for a variety of designs.

(b) Consider the position of your notice boards in relation to the church building and the routes followed by traffic and by passers-by. You should be addressing the following issues:

- Will they be readily seen without offending by their excessive dominance over the streetscape?
- How fast will the onlooker be moving? A notice board to be seen from a car or a bus will not be the same as one before which the pedestrian may thoughtfully pause.
- How will they appear in relation to the architecture of the church itself behind them, the boundary and railings of the churchyard, a lychgate or a car park? The style should be appropriate to your church building and its context.
- Think about the size and height of each board, and mark its dimensions clearly on the drawing.
- Is each notice board to be fixed to the wall of the church, or will it be freestanding?
- Different rules apply in relation to whether or not planning permission will be required, but you should decide what is right for you then apply for any permissions you may need.
- Will each board be internal and external? You may need a board inside for family notices. Control should be exercised over who is allowed to pin their notices onto it, and how often they are cleared.

3.4. Architectural appearance

(a) Some diversity of style is appropriate within a framework of appropriate formality.

(b) Good manners should be observed, and respect should be paid to a conservation area with a strong local character. Bear in mind the architectural style which your notice boards should follow, whether they should have for example a moulded cornice or a simple aluminium frame.

(c) Each board should be carefully designed, with a drawing by your Architect, and its construction and materials thoroughly considered so that it is robust, waterproof and durable. The drawing should always illustrate a cross-section through the board and its frame.

(d) The material and style of lettering should also be carefully chosen and illustrated, as well as their colours and those of the surface of the board itself (to contrast with the lettering) and the frame. The lettering should in any event be carefully set out on the drawing before the sign writer starts work. Each board should be designed as a harmonious whole.

3.5. Wording

(a) Finally, do not neglect the grammar, syntax and punctuation of the wording on the notice board. Avoid unintended humour, or offering opportunities for the graffiti artist.

4. PERMISSIONS

(a) You will need to get a faculty both for a new notice board and for refurbishing an existing notice board, other than just like for like repainting or adding a new Vicar's name.

(b) The information you provide to the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) to your application should include the PCC resolution, photographs (either digital or prints) of the church and area to be affected, a location plan showing where the board(s) will be positioned, detail on the wording and lettering style and a colour scheme/chart. It is important that the DAC sees the boards(s) in its/their context. If you are using prints, you might mark them up with the shape of the board, or even make a tracing paper overlay.

(a) Bear in mind that you may require planning permission. Make sure you consult the local authority.

5. FURTHER HINTS

(d) If the board needs to be repainted anyway, maybe you should take the opportunity for improvements in its design. In any event, out of date information should not be allowed to remain on the board after a previous incumbent has moved on!

(e) If you need advice or you want to discuss further, speak to your Archdeacon, or the DAC Secretary on (020) 7932 1230.

(f) Helpful information on church notice boards is also to be found on pp 156 ff of "The Churchyards Handbook", by the Council for the Care of Churches, available from Church House Bookshop.

**London Diocesan Advisory Committee
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