



The
United
Reformed
Church

Help and Advice

Northern Synod Office, 4 College Lane, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 8JJ (0191-232 1168)

Bulletin 55: LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS

The Help & Advice Group was set up by Synod in 2009, to support local churches in being informed and effective in their life and mission. The group was disbanded in 2014, as part of a simplification of Synod committees, and its work continues through the Trust Officer, under the oversight of the Trust. We are willing to try to provide specific advice on particular topics. Please get in touch if you have questions or suggestions.

This article is part of a series giving an overview of particular subjects on interest for local churches. We also circulate general updates from time to time. Bulletins will also be posted on the members' area of the website with direct links to other websites.

Where readers are directed to web-based resources, the Synod Office is willing to respond to reasonable requests for printed out information for readers without web access, although they may find it more satisfactory to follow up their interest through their local library's web access.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and

The Ecclesiastical Exemption (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (England) Order 2010

These laws give exemption for church buildings of the main denominations from local authority control of works to listed buildings and buildings in conservation areas. This a big benefit, as it means that developments in worship styles and liturgy can be taken into account alongside conservation principles.

In the Northern Synod, 18 United Reformed Churches are listed buildings and 21 are in conservation areas.

If you have any questions about listed buildings or conservation areas, you can ask the Synod's Listed Buildings Advisory Committee (LBAC). See the Synod Handbook or contact Synod Office for details.

If you plan to carry out building works in a listed building or to the exterior of a church in a conservation area, you may well need listed building/conservation area consent before you can start. (In some cases, you may also need local authority planning permission or building regulations approval).

Works which may substantially alter the character, appearance or value of the building will of course also require Synod approval.

Procedure

To apply for consent, your Church Meeting should resolve to send Form 1 to Secretary of the Synod Property Committee (SPC), and Form 1 and all supporting documentation to the Secretary of the LBAC. Synod Executive Committee currently fulfils the function of SPC.

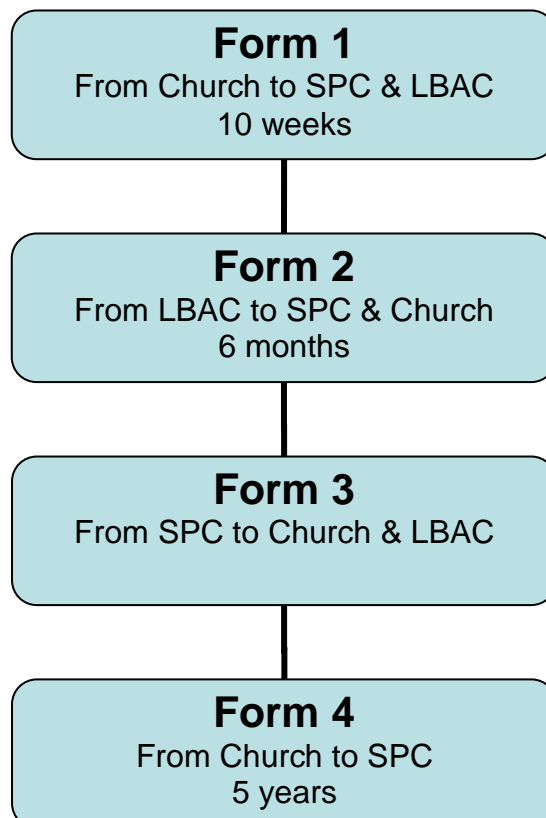
The proposed works should be advertised locally on a site notice, and if external works are proposed also in a local newspaper. The notice should detail the works and where plans can be inspected, and invite comments to the Synod within 28 days.

The LBAC will consider the application and consult with various statutory bodies, before giving its advice, on Form 2, which is sent both to the church and (with copies of all supporting documentation), to the Secretary of the SPC within 10 weeks. (If the LBAC advises refusal of consent or significant conditions, they will also supply Form 6, which should be completed and sent to the Secretary of the SPC within 6 months if the church still wishes to proceed with the application. The LBAC and the consultative bodies then have a further 28 days to comment.)

The SPC will then consider the application and advice, and will issue its decision on Form 3 within a further 3 months. (The church can appeal against refusal of consent to an Assembly-appointed Appeals Commission within 6 months.)

Form 4 should be sent to the Secretary of the SPC on completion of the works.

The full procedure can be downloaded from <http://urc-northernsynod.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Listed-Buildings-Control-Procedure.pdf>.



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